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EASTWARD

TRAVELS IN

EGYPT, PALESTINE, AND SYRIA

BY NORMAN MACLEOD, D.D.

58800
ac.

WITH THIRTY ILLUSTRATIONS

STRAHAN & CO.
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1872

[*Third Edition*]

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MY ——

TO YOU I DEDICATE THIS BOOK

WITH A LOVE

WHICH I CAN GIVE TO YOU ALONE.

WITHOUT YOU IN MY HOME

I NEVER COULD HAVE PARTED FROM IT WITH SO LITTLE CARE

NOR HAVE RETURNED TO IT WITH

SO MUCH JOY

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I.

TO MALTA AND ALEXANDRIA.

I.

TO MALTA AND ALEXANDRIA.

I WAS not ordered by "the doctors" to visit the East for the good of my health, which, I am thankful to say, was, and continues to be, excellent; nor was I deputed by the Church to which I have the honour to belong to undertake a missionary tour; nor did I propose to myself the vain attempt of writing a book describing the East for the thousandth time, whether in the form of "letters," "tour," "diary," "sketches," "thoughts," or "pictures." I even protested to my excellent publisher and fellow-traveller against preparing a single article for the pages of 'Good Words.' I went to visit Palestine, "the place of my fathers' sepulchres;" and no one will be disposed to ask a reason for my undertaking such a journey.

But there is something so fascinating about the East, that it is hardly possible for the traveller to resist the *cacoethes scribendi*, that he may in some measure share his enjoyment of it with others. In spite of the conviction, then, that nothing new can be written about the East by a hurried tourist, that all which one can say has doubtless been said far better by some other before, that only the scholar, the antiquary, or the artist can reveal new facts or new beauties, the impression still remains that we may be able to give some pleasure by telling, as by the fire-side, what we saw and enjoyed, to the invalid, or the weary man, who may be unable to digest "sterner stuff." I would respectfully ask such to accompany me Eastward.

Let me inform those who have not 'Bradshaw' by them, that Alexandria is the starting-point to Palestine for all travellers approaching it from the west. This port may be reached by the admirable steamers of Mr. M'Iver, from Liverpool, or by the Peninsular and Oriental Company's steamers from Southampton, and a glimpse of Gibraltar be got *en route*. To those who enjoy a sea voyage, and to whom a few days' extra time is of no consequence, this route is by far the easiest. The shortest sea passage is by Ancona, to which there is now a continuous line of railway from Turin. There is also communication twice a month from Marseilles to

Alexandria by the first-rate steamers of the French *Messagéries Impériales* Company, as well as by those of the old and favourite Peninsular and Oriental Company. The expense by either route is much the same, everything taken into account; perhaps, upon the whole, that by Marseilles is the cheapest. Those, too, who have never been abroad may by this route get a glimpse of the Continent as they pass along. We, for example, left London on Wednesday morning, were all Thursday in Paris, left the same night, and reached Marseilles about one in the afternoon of Friday. This is little no doubt, yet the day in Paris and the general view of the country, including the picturesque towns of Nismes and Avignon, may be put in the balance against Gibraltar.

We left Marseilles on the morning of the 20th of February, in the somewhat old—and not in all respects singularly comfortable—but yet sound ship *Valetta*, with as good a captain and officers as voyager could wish. It is a weakness of mine always to prefer a British ship to every other, especially when out of soundings. There is something in the "Ay, ay, sir!" which inspires a confidence that nothing uttered by a foreigner can do. This is of course "provincial," but I don't profess to be anything else.

The weather had nothing of the warm south in it;

the air was sharp and chill. We had showers of snow and sleet, the hills were white, the skies dull as lead, and one looked forward to Egypt and Syria as to a comfortable fire, whatever other attraction they might possess. Soon after leaving the splendid docks of Marseilles, we sat down to a sumptuous breakfast, and, as it happens in most sea voyages, the passengers met together for the first time,—and in very many cases for the last. How important is the prospect of a voyage, even of a week, to those who have to "go down to the sea in ships;" but to none on board of this or any vessel afloat, was it more momentous than to a respected member of our party. Poor fellow! He was a victim; a down-trodden, crushed, silent, and miserable slave to the demon of sea-sickness. That remorseless ocean-monster shook him, bound him, laid him prostrate, beat every bone in his body, knotted every muscle, tore every nerve, tortured him, turned him inside out, yet without a word of remonstrance from him, except a feeble groan, or look of agony from glazed eyes which had hardly an atom of expression to respond to the truly kind look of Morris the steward. But at this first breakfast-table my friend was all alive and energetic; the power of the land was still upon him, and the ship was steady as a rock; the beat of her powerful paddles was hardly echoed by the glasses upon the table. "How fortunate we are,"

"What a calm day," "I hope it will continue so," "No one could be sick with such weather," "We may have it so all the way to Alexandria"—these were the pleasing reflections from the different smiling, laughing, contented passengers, male and female, military and mercantile, Jew and Gentile, French, German, and English, who surrounded the table. Yet these pleasant hopes were most unexpectedly interrupted by an unaccountable lurch of the vessel, succeeded by another, and accompanied by the sharp scream of the wind as it struck the rigging, its obedient harp-strings. I suggested to my friend the prudence of lying down while I went to ascertain the cause of this very strange commotion. He did so, promising to join me in a few minutes. Alas! it was nearly a week ere he cared for anything upon earth, or rather upon sea, for all upon the quiet and solid earth seemed to him a paradise, which he would never revisit, unless for burial, if even for that.

I shall never forget the scene which presented itself when I went on deck. We had been caught by a gale, which very rapidly increased to a hurricane. Now although, as the old song says,

"I've cross'd the great Atlantic,
And weathered many a breeze,
Besides being up the Baltic
And divers other seas,"

yet I never before encountered a hurricane; and it is well worth seeing, for once at least. The waves at first seemed taken all aback, as if suddenly roused from their beds, without having time to dress themselves and appear with that solemn dignity before the world which becomes an ocean-sea. They rose with awful bulk of green water, and swelled up until, curling their monstrous heads, with a thundering and defiant roar they sank again, only to gather strength to come nearer and nearer, as if to send the vessel down with one thud to the lowest abyss. Again the wind seized them with a hissing yell, as if in a passion, and tore them to pieces when they presumed to rise, scattering them into an atmosphere of the finest snowdrift, mingling air and water in one white seething plain, and seeming to unite sea and sky in a drizzle of flying mist. One of the most remarkable effects of the wind upon the sea was along an ugly range of precipices to leeward. The waves, according to the calculations of one of the officers, were driven up the precipice for about 120 feet, but, owing to the force of the wind, were unable to fall back with all their volume, so that the foam seemed to incrust the rock like ice, and to blow as smoke over the summit. The watch could not stand on the forecastle, which seemed buried in spray. The officers held on upon the gangway, their faces well "cured" with "the

salt sea faeme." We bored our way till the afternoon through all this turmoil with that calm and resolute bravery which our steam-engine personified, as it worked away steadily with its giant arms aided by regularly supplied drops of oil.

The wind blew as if it would blow its last. "Is it possible," I asked our gallant little captain, "that it could blow stronger?" "I have never," he replied, "seen it blow so hard except in the China seas." "What if the engine give way?" was the question suggested by me—who says I was uneasy?—to the old and steady engineer, Mr. Allan, from Glasgow. But he would not entertain the suggestion. "A better tool never was in a ship, and for seven years she has never made a miss," was his only reply. "Thank you, Allan!"

Notwithstanding the excitement of the hurricane and its intense interest, I was by no means disposed to complain when the *Valetta* ran for shelter—a most unusual occurrence. Fortunately Toulon happened to be the harbour of refuge. It was worth our while encountering the gale, to enjoy the unexpected pleasure of seeing this famous place. My chief associations with it, strange to say, were stories told me by "the Old Lieutenant," of Sir Samuel Hood and other worthies whose exploits were achieved here. The severe gale we had encountered told even upon this quiet nook. A brig which had

broken from her moorings was being towed back to them by a tug; large ships of war, with their topmasts struck, were rolling so that we could see their decks. We were not permitted to land, and could therefore only estimate the strength of the place by what we saw from our deck; but judging from the batteries, which extend from the water's edge to the mountain sides, Toulon is impregnable. It must be a beautiful place in summer, and highly picturesque, but on this day it looked cold and miserable in the extreme.

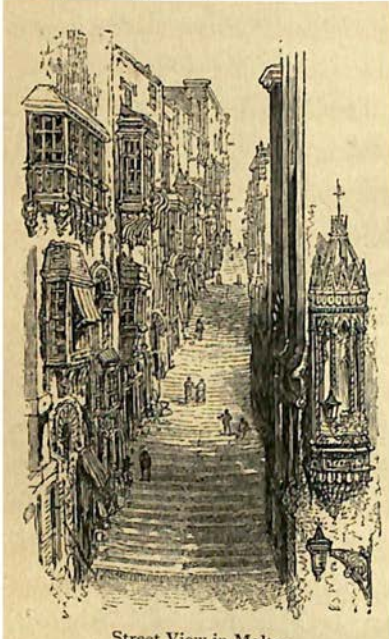
The rest of our voyage to Malta was rather rough, but no special event disturbed it. My older readers may not care to hear of the following incident, but doubtless the children will. It is one very common in all voyages during stormy weather and when far from the coast. Several small birds were blown out of sight of land during the gale. They were so wearied as to be easily caught. One little lark was so pleased with the warmth of my hand that he sat down on it, burying his little cold feet in his feathers, and looking about with his bright eye, not in the least afraid, and as if feeling assured that he had been cast amongst kind people. These birds are always very thirsty, and drink with delight. In summer they sometimes remain on board for days, feeding upon flies, and in some cases they have been known to clear a cabin of cockroaches, a sort of

Malta.

ugly blackbeetle, and to get quite fat upon them. One beautiful lark which we caught remained until we were passing close to the shore in the Straits of Bonifacio. We there let him off, and he flew away to sing again in his own green fields; but another died, and was found in the morning in his cotton bed lying on his back. his little claws curled up to the sky.

We reached Malta late on the night of the 23rd, and finding that the steamer was not to leave till three in the morning we resolved to go on shore. Most fortunately for us a friend on board had a friend in Malta, the kind-hearted Free Church minister, who came out to receive him and be his guide during the strange hours of midnight. All the world knows Malta; yet I would not exchange my impressions of it, received during those silent watches, for the most accurate knowledge which could be obtained by daylight. Strange to say, I feel almost thankful that my stay was so short in this famous city of old knights and modern soldiers. I have no intention of turning to any gazetteer or history of the knights of Malta to get up a description of its harbours, batteries, or ancient history. Any one wishing this sort of information may get it without going there. I am quite satisfied with what I learned from my midnight walk, while every one, the governor included, was in bed, except the sentries and a few policemen and houseless ragamuffins.

The moon was shining "with the heavens all bare;" every house revealed itself, not in the clearness of noon-day, which would have been a fault,—few towns, and fewer men, being able to stand that sort of revelation,—but in the soft and subdued golden light of the full moon which blended wonderfully with the limestone of which the island is composed. We walked up streets by long flights of stairs, admired the balconies, and the innumerable bits of picturesque architecture and varied outline that everywhere met the eye, and seemed so tasteful when compared with the pasteboard rows of our prosaic streets, which are built by contract and squeezed into stupid shape by our city authorities, who seem to think that the "orders" of architecture mean all houses being alike, as policemen are. We soon reached the side of the town which overlooks the great harbour; and though



Street View in Malta.

I have lost all memory of the names, if I ever heard them (which I no doubt did), of forts, streets, palaces, batteries, yet I never can forget the impression made by what Joseph Hume used to call "the tottle of the whole." Guided by our friend we wandered along battery upon battery, passed innumerable rows of big guns, which had pyramids of shot beside them, and which looked down white precipices, as if watching the deep harbour which washed their base, and sorrowing that they had nothing to do. We saw forts,—forts everywhere, forts on this side, forts on the other side, forts above us, and forts below us. We saw beneath us dark forms of line-of-battle ships, like giants asleep, but ready in a moment to wake up with their thunder. Yet we saw no signs of life in the silence of midnight except a few lights skimming across the deep black water below; nor did we hear a sound except the song of the Maltese boatman who steered his gondola with its firefly lamp, and the tread of the sentinel as his bayonet gleamed in the moonlight, and the sudden question issued from his English voice, "Who goes there?" We stood beside noble palaces, formerly inhabited by the famous knights, every ornament, every coat of arms, distinct and clear as by day; and we thought——well, never mind our thinking. We stood beside the statue of the great and good Lord Hastings, and traced his silent features between us and the sky, which revived

many thoughts in me of my earliest and best friends. And thus we wandered until nearly three in the morning, in a sort of strange and mysterious dreamland; and for aught that appeared, the Grand Master and all his knights still possessed the island, and might be seen on the morrow's morn,—if we were disposed to wait for them,—watching a fleet of infidel Moslem in the distance, come to disturb their peace and the peace of Europe, if not to destroy Christianity itself. And we thought—— no matter, ye sturdy Protestants, what we thought of these fine fellows!* How thankful we were that all the shops were closed, where we might have been cheated by daylight; that priests, and friars, and nuns, and sea captains, and admirals, and all the puff and parade, were snoring in their nightcaps. They would have, beyond doubt, destroyed the pleasing illusion. After buying some delicious oranges from ever-wakeful boys, and bidding grateful farewell to our obliging guide, we returned to the *Valetta* full of thankfulness for our midnight visit to Malta. We never wish to see it again. We fear the daylight.

After leaving Malta we seemed to have entered another world. The sky was without a cloud; the sea was unruffled by the slightest breeze, and began to be coloured by that exquisite deep, *lapis-lazuli*-like blue which may

* See Appendix No. I.

be approached sometimes in our northern skies, but never in our northern seas. Nothing could be more beautiful than the play of the white foam as it flew from the ship's bow, or from her paddles, and fell like white pearls upon the glassy surface. I was reminded of a similar effect at the Falls of Niagara, produced by the sparkling foam as it ran up the smooth surface of the deep water, which, like a huge green wheel of ocean, rolled over the Table Rock. In both cases, the contrast was beautiful in the extreme,—between the pure white and indigo blue in the one instance, and the emerald sea-green in the other.

During our short voyage to Alexandria shoals of dolphins rose alongside of us, while once or twice flying-fish were seen skimming the surface with silvery wings,—both features significant of a change in our latitude. Strange to say, our engine, which had stood so well throughout the hurricane, broke down in the calm on two occasions. My worthy friend the engineer accounted for this by saying "that it was entirely owing to the number of ministers on board, and nothing else. Nae engine," he added, with emphasis, "could staun five o' ye; the best machines are naething against ministers!" But making all allowance for our parson-power, the "good tool" had no doubt been wounded in the battle with the storm.

One other little fact I must not omit to mention, as evidencing the distance to which fine substances can be wafted by the air. For two days, and when out of sight of land, though our course ran nearly parallel to Africa, the weather rigging of the ship was all brown with fine sand, which adhered to the tar. And this was visible only on the side of the ropes next the desert.

And now for a few days we felt the perfect repose and benefit of a voyage. To one who, like myself, never suffers from nausea even, it is the most perfect rest. The busy world, we know, is getting on very well without us, and so we determine to get on without it. The post-man's knock belongs to another sphere of existence, and we hear it no more, except as in a feverish dream. A mighty gulf of deep water separates us from the world of letters, business, calls, meetings, appointments, committees, visits, and all like disturbers of selfish ease. We assume, being ourselves in robust health, that all our friends are in a like condition, and are pleased to think that they lament our absence, hope to hear from us by the next mail, and will be glad to have us home again; while sometimes we cannot but regret, with a feeling which alarms our conscience, that we do not sufficiently respond to their anxieties. On ship-board, pleasure and necessity are one. We cannot help being idle. We may possibly exert ourselves to play draughts or backgammon,

but not chess—that requires thought. To read anything is an act of condescension, and no one thinks that his duty. In fact, the word "duty" seems confined to the officers and crew, including the steward. Those portions, too, of our life which on land are made subordinate to more important things, such as our meals and sleep, at sea are made the leading events of the day. We retire at any hour to our cabin, sleep, read, meditate, as we please, and as long as we please. No one accuses us of sloth, and asks us to rise and take "a constitutional." No one asks if we are ill—that is charitably taken for granted; the majority are surprised if we are well, and envy us. We are, moreover, not expected to speak to any one, and if words are exchanged they are understood, upon honour, to be mere contributions to general happiness. The brain and memory empty themselves so completely of all that has troubled or occupied them during previous periods of existence, that we seem to begin life again as children, and to be amused with the most passing trifles. Sensible men who, a few weeks or even days before, were occupied with important affairs of Church or State, become interested in the cow on board, feel her horns, scratch the back of her ears; and beg for some crumbs of bread to feed the chickens. A dog on board becomes an institution. A sea-bird attracts every eye; while a ship looming on the horizon makes all, who can

stand, come on deck and watch the approaching wonder, as the Ancient Mariner watched the mysterious sail. Who, on shore, ever thinks of the longitude or latitude of his house? Not one in fifty believes that it has either one or other; but at sea our position is known every day at twelve o'clock; and the spot upon the globe's surface which we at that moment occupy becomes a matter of serious speculation until dinner-time.

We beseech wearied men never to visit Paris, to be baked on the Boulevards, sick of the Rue Rivoli, have their digestion destroyed by mushrooms and cockscombs at the Trois Frères; nor to be pestered by guides, ropes, ladders, mules, or alpenstocks, in walking across slippery glaciers, or down savage ravines in Switzerland; nor to be distracted by "Murray" in wandering from gallery to gallery, or from church to church in Italy;—but to launch upon the deep, get out of sight of land, and have their brains thoroughly invigorated by fresh air and salt water.

By the kind and cordial permission of the captain, I had a religious service with the men in the forecastle, as my custom has ever been when on a voyage. It had little formality in it: some were in their hammocks, most were seated around on the "bunkers," and were dimly visible under the low deck, with the feeble lights. There is a reality in this easy and familiar way of addressing Jack, which is much more likely to do him good than the

regular assemblage with Sunday dress in the cabin, when probably a sermon is read for the benefit of the educated passengers, which the crew take for granted is not expected to be understood by any one below the purser. In such cases they attend worship for the same reason that they wash the decks or reef topsails,—because they are "ordered." I would therefore earnestly beg of my respected brethren in the ministry to remember "poor Jack" when at sea, and never to imagine that a sailor "cares for none of these things." Few audiences are more attentive, more willing to learn, or more grateful for so small a kindness. We are apt to forget what these men endure for our sakes—what sacrifices are required by the necessities of their occupation,—what their sore temptations, and few advantages. The least we can do, when an opportunity offers itself, is to speak to them as to brethren, and to tell them of the love of a common Father and Saviour; and we know not when the seed thus cast upon the waters may spring up. It may be in the hospital among strangers, or when pacing the deck at midnight, or when clinging to a plank for life, or even when going down "with all hands."

On the forenoon of Saturday, the 27th, we sighted Alexandria.

The first sign of nearing a new country from the sea, is generally the pilot-boat and its crew. With what

interest do we look over the side of the ship, and watch the dresses and countenances of the first specimens of the tribe among whom we are to pitch our tents for a time! The boat, with a flag in its bow, which pulled out to meet us from Alexandria, had a crew which were a fit introduction to the East, with their rough comfortable brown boatcoats and hood, their petticoat-trousers, swarthy faces, and shining teeth. And as for "Master George" himself, the Egyptian pilot, as he stepped up the gangway to shake hands with his old friends, and take charge of the ship, he was, from toe to turban, a perfect study for an artist.

There is nothing at all remarkable in the view of Alexandria from the sea. Notwithstanding the white palace, the old summerhouse of the Pasha, and other distinguished buildings, which are sure to be pointed out, the town looks like a long horizontal streak of whitewash, mingled with brown, and crossed perpendicularly with the sharp lines of ships' masts.

But a scene well worth noticing was the crowd of boats that pressed around the ship to convey passengers to the shore. Imagine thirty or forty such, with their nondescript crews, crowding to the ship's side, every man on board of them appearing in a towering passion, and yelling as if in the agony of despair, and, with outstretched hands and flashing eyes, pouring forth a stream

Scene on the quay at Alexandria on the arrival of a steamer.

of guttural Arabic, that seemed to the ear to be a whole dictionary of imprecations without a pause, and as far as one could judge, without a motive, unless it were that they took us for lost spirits claimable by the greatest demon. The noise is great when landing from a Highland steamer, and when Highland boatmen, the scum of the port, are contending for passengers or luggage. But without defending the Gaelic as mellifluous, or the Highlanders as types of meekness on such an occasion, yet in vehemence of gesticulation, in genuine power of lip and lung to fill the air with a roar of incomprehensible exclamations, nothing on earth, so long as the human body retains its present arrangement of muscles and nervous vitality, can surpass the Egyptians and their language.

If the Pyramids were built, as some allege they were, to preserve the inch as a measure of length for the world, why should not the Sphinx have been raised, with her calm eye, dignified face, and sweet smile, even now breaking through her ruins like sunlight through the crags, to be an everlasting rebuke to Eastern rage, and a lesson in stone exhorting to silence?

My first day in the East stands alone in my memory, unapproached by all I have ever seen. It excited feelings of novelty and wonder which I fear can never be reproduced. I had expected very little from Alexandria, and thought of it only as a place of merchandise, noto-

rious for donkeys, donkey-boys, and Pompey's Pillar. But as soon as I landed, I realised at once the presence of a totally different world of human beings from any I had seen before. The charm and fascination consisted in the total difference in every respect between East and West.

Passing through the utter chaos, dilapidation, and confusion of the custom-house, and clambering over, as we best could, the innumerable bales of cotton, under the protection of the blue cloudless heavens,—winding our way among goods of every description, and between barrels and hampers, amid the cries and noise of the mixed multitude who crowded the wharves, filled the boats, and offered themselves as porters, guides, and whatever else could command a *backsheesh*, we reached the outskirts of the custom-house, passed the officers, entered the bazaar, and had time to look around.

The first impression made upon a European is, as I have said, that he has never seen anything at all like it. The shops, with various kinds of goods displayed behind a man who is seated cross-legged, willing to sell them apparently as a favour, hardly attract the eye any more than open cupboards would do. But the persons who crowd along the narrow lane—only look at them! They are manifestly from all parts of the earth—Greeks, Turks, Jews, Armenians, Hindoos, Copts, Arabs, Nubians, Alba-

nians, drunken Jack Tars, English officers on the way to or from India, &c. With the exception of the Europeans, each man appears in his own distinct individuality of face and raiment. In America there is a Yankee type everywhere visible, with lips, nose, cheeks, and hair by no means romantic, though business-like; in Russia there is a Muscovite type, which admits of little variety; and everywhere, from the Mississippi to the Volga, there is a certain uniformity of face, or at all events of dress; coats and trousers with buttons, long tails or short tails, hats or caps,—a sort of Caucasian respectability. But here, each face seems to stand alone. There are eyes and foreheads, noses and beards, colours of skin, peculiarities of expression—the sly, the dignified, the rascally, the ignorant, the savage, the refined, the contented, the miserable,—giving each face its own distinct place in the globe. And there is, if possible, a greater variety in costume. Every man seems to have studied his own taste, or his own whim, or, possibly, his own religion, in the shape, colour, and number of his garments. The jackets, the pélisses or dressing-gowns, the waistcoats, the petticoats, the inexpressibles, the sashes, the turbans, the headgear, each and all are different in colour and in details of arrangement. The arms, whether dirk or dagger, single pistols, or half a dozen, modern, or as old as the invention of gunpowder,

sword, gun, or spear—each has its own peculiar form and arrangement, so that every Eastern has to a Western a novelty and picturesqueness which are indescribable. And the motley crowd presses along: fat, contented, oily Greek merchants, or majestic Turks, on fine horses splendidly caparisoned, or on aristocratic donkeys, that would despise to acknowledge as of the same race the miserable creatures which bray in our coal-carts; bare-legged donkey-boys, driving their more plebeian animals before them; Arabs from the desert, with long guns and gipsy-like coverings, stalking on in silence; beggars, such as one sees in the pictures of the old masters—verily "poor and needy, blind and naked;" insane persons, with idiotic look, and a few rags covering their bronzed bodies, seeking alms; Greek priests, Coptic priests, and Latin priests; doctors of divinity and dervishes; little dumpy women with their peculiar waddling gait, wrapt in white muslin sheets, their eyes only visible; and towering over all this strange throng are strings of camels, lank and lean, so patient-looking and submissive, pacing on under their loads of cotton, with bent heads and sleepy eyes, their odd-looking drivers mounted high above, rocking with that peculiar motion which the camel's pace produces—all this, and infinitely more, formed a scene that looked like a fancy fair got up for the amusement of strangers.

Before leaving the bazaar, let us look into this coffee-shop open from the street. There is no ornament of any kind in it, nor does it aim at the magnificence and glitter seen in our whisky and gin shops at home—such palaces being unknown in the East. It is of the humblest description, having no ornament of any kind but a few mats on its floor and upon its raised dais. Capital is not required,—a little charcoal, a coffee-pot, and some coffee forming the whole stock in trade. Odd-looking, turbaned men, smoking their nargiles, are each a picture of quiet contentment. But the chief attraction to me was a blind man, who sat cross-legged on the dais, with a rude sort of fiddle, on which, resting it perpendicularly on his knee, he played a monotonous accompaniment to his chant. He was apparently an *improvisatore*, who had to think for a little time before composing his verse, or more probably he was only a reciter of old Arab poems. While chanting and scraping on the fiddle, there was a smile of good humour on his face. No sooner were two or three lines repeated, than his audience exhibited the greatest satisfaction, and turned their eyes to a young man who sat on the opposite dais, quietly smoking,—a competitor, apparently, with the blind musician and ballad-singer. He seemed sometimes puzzled for a moment, as he blew a few rapid whiffs from his pipe, while the blind man listened with the greatest

attention. But no sooner was his response given than a general movement was visible among the auditors, who turned to the blind minstrel as if saying, "Match that, old fellow, if you can!"

Along the whole bazaar there were little episodes of this sort, presenting features of social life totally different from our own. But my excellent friend the missionary of the Church of Scotland, at Alexandria, who had come to meet us, would not permit me to remain longer in the bazaar. He laughed heartily at my enthusiasm, assuring me that I would think nothing of all this by the time I reached Damascus, and begged I would come away, as we must have a drive and see a few sights before dinner; although, to tell the truth, I was much more pleased with the sort of sights around me than with the prospect of beholding even Pompey's Pillar. Obeying orders, we were soon in the square, or long parallelogram which forms the respectable part of the town and where the chief hotels are situated; but it had no more interest for me than Euston Square. Not so the drive. Soon after leaving the hotel we were again in the East, with its dust, poverty, picturesqueness, and confusion. We visited an old Greek church, which four years ago had been excavated out of a mass of débris. We gazed with interest upon its walls dimly frescoed with Christian subjects, and looked into its dark burial vaults, and

thought of the Alexandrian school, and of those who had worshipped, probably more than a thousand years ago, in this old edifice. We passed lines of camel-hair tents perched upon a rising ground and occupied by the Bedouin, who had come from the desert, perhaps to buy or to sell; we passed the brown clay huts of the Fellaheen, with their yelling dogs and naked children; we passed crowds of donkeys bearing water-skins, resembling black pigs that had been drowned and were oozing with water; we saw with delight that feature of the East—groves of palms (needing no glass to cover them) drooping their feathered heads in the sunny sky; we stood, where many generations had stood before, beneath what is called Pompey's Pillar, and repeated the speculations of past ages as to how it could have been erected there, what a glorious portico that must have been of which it had formed a unit, and what a magnificent temple it must have adorned. We then returned to the square from which we had started, feeling more and more that we were in a new world.

One or two other sights added to our enjoyment of this first day in the East. One was a bare-legged *syce* with silver-headed cane, who flew along, like an ostrich, to clear the way for the carriage of his noble Jewish master and mistress, and to announce their august presence, while they reclined in their handsome chariot.

driven by a Nubian charioteer, with comfortable satisfaction in their look, such as their ancestors manifested when, in the same country long ago, they enjoyed leeks and garlic, wishing for little better. Another sight was a funeral, in which the body was carried on a bier, preceded, as the custom is, by blind men, and followed by relatives, and women as hired mourners who did their duty well, giving loud lamentations for their money. And another was a marriage procession, in which the bridegroom was going for his bride with lanterns and wild Turkish screaming instruments intended to represent music. And having seen all this we joined European society at the *table d'hôte* at a late hour, and fell again into the old grooves of modern civilisation.

After dinner, the conversation in the smoking-room turned upon the state of the country. There was an eager inquirer, with note-book in hand, who cross-questioned a few witnesses who were lolling about the window, and seemed disposed to answer his queries. The most ready replies were given by two persons, the one with a red nose, and the other with a squint.

Inquirer asks:—"What sort of man is the Pasha?" He had been given to understand in London that he was a wide-awake, spirited gentleman, and thoroughly alive to the benefits of commerce and free trade, &c.

Red Nose blows two or three whiffs, and mutters, "A

thorough scoundrel!" Having gathered force to enlarge upon his text, he adds, "You know, all 'the powers that be' in this land are scoundrels; you cannot believe what any one says. If he speaks the truth, it is either in mistake, or because he can make more by it than by lying. Bribery and corruption are the rule from the Pasha to the donkey-boy. The great king in the country, upstairs and downstairs and in my lady's chamber, is *backsheesh*."

Silence reigns, and all the witnesses seem to agree on this point. Red Nose, encouraged, proceeds, being stimulated by the demand from Inquirer for an illustration:

"Last year, this admirable Pasha—this eastern merchant—sold the first cotton he should bring into Alexandria, that is, his first crop, to the house of —— and Co. at a certain price. Cotton in the mean time rose, and the Pasha sold his crop at an advanced price to another house; and being challenged for his breach of contract, he defended himself upon the ground that his bargain was to sell the first cotton brought *into* Alexdria, whereas this had been delivered at the station *outside* of Alexandria!"

Several declared this to be a fact beyond all dispute.

"The truth is," remarked another party, "nothing can exceed the ill-usage of the English by the Egyptian

authorities. Our Consul, good man though he be, is too soft, too easy, and too much of a gentleman for them. It is not so with the French. A complaint made at the French consulate is immediately attended to, and the power of France is brought down upon the Turks at once. With the English Government, through their Consul, the Pasha is approached with 'Please be so good, your highness, as to consider this or that;' but with the French, the word of command goes forth, 'This must be done, sir! or we shall pull down our flag.'"

"It is quite possible," said the stranger, who was swinging in a chair, and whose face was nearly concealed by an immense beard, but who had a rather remarkable expression of intelligence—"it is quite possible that there is a good deal of bullying on the part of both the great powers; but I am also disposed to think that if the consuls would tell their side of the story, they could say something about the bullying of the merchants also. I have been knocked about a good deal in foreign ports, though I neither buy nor sell, and I have everywhere noticed a habit on the part of many resident merchants, of great respectability too, and amongst none more than my countrymen the English, of treating the native powers with proud contempt, and of showing very little respect for their national laws, their feelings, or even religious customs, when these threaten to stand in the way of their

becoming rich. Their idea seemed to be that Providence had sent them abroad for the sole purpose of making money by good means, bad means, any means, but to make it by all means, and as rapidly as possible. If any difference arises between them and the native government, the poor Consul, forsooth, is told to poke up the British Lion, and make him roar. And I have also noticed, that our Englishmen have, in many cases, far less respect for their religion, though it be true, than the heathen have for theirs, though it be false."

"How so?" inquired the man with the squint, as if he had been in the habit of looking at a question from all sides.

"Why," replied Long Beard, "last Sunday, for example, I noticed many vessels from England loading and unloading, and I was told that this was done in some cases by command of the captains, and in others by the imperative orders of the commercial houses at home. This is the sort of way British Christians—British Protestants—often witness for their religion among Turks and heathen. No wonder missionaries often labour in vain, when they are practically opposed by so many careless professing Christians."

"I'll bet a dollar that you are a missionary!" cried Red Nose, taking his cigar out of his mouth, and looking inquisitively towards the stranger.

"It is quite unnecessary to risk your money, for I gladly admit the fact."

"Whew!" remarked Red Nose, mysteriously; "that accounts for it!"

"Accounts for what?" inquired the missionary.

"Oh, nothing in particular!" replied Red Nose, breaking off. "I don't like disputes about religion."

After taking a short stroll to look at the stars, and observing that there was as yet no gas in Alexandria with all its progress and wealth, but that every one was obliged by law to carry a lantern, we retired to bed.

We met there with some friends, whose acquaintance we had made in other portions of the civilised world; but, fortunately, owing to the cool state of the weather, they did not press their company upon us so as to be numbered amongst the plagues of Egypt. It was many years since we had met the genuine mosquito; but who that has once experienced it, can forget the nervous shock which runs through the body when his sharp "ping" is heard close to the ear as he blows his trumpet for battle! To open the net curtains in order to drive a single enemy out, is probably to let a dozen in; and once they are in, how difficult to discover the aerial imps! and, when discovered, how difficult to get at them! and when all this labour has been gone through, and the curtains are again tucked in, and every crevice closed, and the

fortress made secure, and the hope indulged that the enemy has fled, and the sweet feeling of unctuous repose again mesmerises soul and body—oh, horror, to hear again at *both* ears "ping, ping-ing!"

On this first night we did battle with intense energy and bravery against one intruder, and having slain him we were at peace; but then came the barking of the dogs—those ceaseless serenaders of Eastern cities, of which more anon—and then sleep as deep as that of Cheops.*

* See Appendix No. II.

II.

CAIRO AND THE PYRAMIDS.

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CAIRO AND THE PYRAMIDS.

IN writing about Alexandria, I hardly alluded to the state of Christian missions or of the Christian Church in that city. And should any reader look for information on these matters, respecting any of the places we visited, he will, I am bound to say, be disappointed. But let not my silence be misinterpreted. It does not arise, verily, from forming a low estimate, but rather a high one, of the importance of such inquiries. For a long and somewhat varied experience has taught me the extreme difficulty of ascertaining facts on a subject involving so many nice and delicate questions as the actual state of any mission, whether to Jew or Gentile. And having had, in the limited period to which I was compelled to confine my

journey, neither the time nor opportunity necessary for inquiry, I feel that it would probably do more harm than good were I to give an opinion on such matters. It is possible that, with this explanation, I may record impressions made upon me by missionary operations, but I will not attempt to do more. I refuse to be cited by any party as a competent witness.

Although Alexandria is the starting-point for Palestine (our ultimate destination), yet who could be in it without seeing Cairo? and who could be in Cairo without seeing the Pyramids, and going the usual round of travellers, since the Deluge, or thereabouts? and who, being in Cairo, could omit a visit to the Red Sea?—all of which we *did* visit, greatly wishing that we could have visited Sinai also, and not stopped, like Pharaoh of old, with the greatest reluctance by the sea. In a few pages of easy talk I will tell what we saw at Cairo.

"It is a moighty queer thing entirely, you may depend," said an Irishman, "to get a railway ticket in Turkish or Arabic, I don't know which. All I know is, that though I can read Irish, I can't read them characters like what a hen would write!" So we felt with Pat at the railway station of Alexandria, *en route* to Cairo. One's ideas about Egypt are made somewhat prosaic by a railway. The familiar whistle, with its impatient screech, which has now for years been a sort

of European music, does not seem to harmonize with the Pharaohs. All the plastic power of fancy cannot cram Rameses the Great, or a member of any of the ten thousand dynasties, into a first class; nor realize the possibility of Sennacherib booking himself with his Assyrian staff for Memphis. It is not so, however, with the Jew, older than either. We saw many of them in the third class, and it seemed a quite natural position for this wandering and immortal tribe, who have had experience of every kind of locomotion, from the time they journeyed from Egypt to Canaan until the present day.

The Delta, as a shoreless ocean of flat, rich land, presented no feature to us of greater interest than a similar expanse of cultivated loam in England, Belgium, or anywhere else. But there ever and anon appeared those unmistakable signs of the old East which linked us to the past and belong not to modern Europe, on which we had now turned our backs. There were, of course, the graceful palms and other trees of Eastern foliage fringing the horizon and reposing in the calm delicious air. There were camels ploughing—a combination, by the way, which seemed to me as unnatural as a pig in harness; for though the creature submitted with patient dignity to the drudgery, it had nevertheless the look of an upper servant out of place—an old huntsman or whipper-in of a gallant pack driving a

coal-cart. It was never intended that this great thirstless teetotal abstainer (for days even from water), who can pace with his noiseless feet, as if in thick stockings, through the desert, and encounter sandstorms and every sort of horror, wander among the rocks of Sinai, go a long pilgrimage to Mecca, or enjoy Arabia Felix,—it was never intended that he should be reduced to do horse, donkey, or ox work, with the plough following his little brush of a tail across the Delta. The ox, if for no other reason than the base idolatries occasioned by his ancestors, should alone be doomed to drudgery like this. But we were told that 800,000 (yes, these are the figures) of horned cattle and horses had been cut off by murrain in Egypt; and that may account, though I don't believe it fully does, for the transformation of the noble "ship of the desert" into a wretched plough tug of the Delta.

As we passed along at a slow rate, yet by no means a smooth one, for a rougher railway we never travelled by, we saw other symptoms of a very different life from what we had been accustomed to;—such as the brown, dusty, crumbling, poverty-stricken mud villages, built upon mounds of rubbish to keep them out of the inundation, with their squalid hovels, whitewashed mosques, and odd-looking inhabitants—male and female; and the pigeon villages, where those birds are reared in flocks

for the market, their nests being clay-pots built into a peculiarly-shaped second story with square walls inclining inwards, like the old Egyptian buildings. We also passed half-naked men, swinging between them, with regular motion, a sort of basket by which they raised water from a ditch on a lower level to one on a higher, which distributed it over the whole field. We also passed water-mills for the same purpose, turned by oxen, camels, or horses; and frequently we passed Mussulmans at their devotions—ay, that is worth our pausing to notice once for all!

How far Mahometans observe the orthodox number of times for devotion (five a day), I do not know; nor yet what proportion the devotional class bears to the indifferent. The fact, however, is patent to every one who travels in the East that prayer is offered up in every place—not in the mosque only, but in the field, on the ship's deck, in the shop, and amidst the confusion and bustle of the railway station. When one sees for the first time a man in a public place or in the middle of a field suddenly drop down to the ground, one is apt to think that he has been seized by a fit, until the fact dawns, from the regularity of his motions, that he is performing some duty. The worshipper goes about it in the most methodical manner. He spreads his carpet on the ground, if he has one, and then, as sailors would

say, takes the bearings of Mecca, towards which he prays. This adjustment of his body, not to speak of his soul, is sometimes not easy, especially on shipboard,

Attitudes of the Mahometan during his Devotions.

when the vessel's course is constantly changing. In such cases he consults his fellow-believers, who will often gather round him, and suggest what in their opinion is the right point of the compass to which to direct his eyes. This being determined, he first of all, whether on land or on shore, stands upright with eyes open; then, after meditating for a moment, puts a thumb close to each ear, erects his fingers fan-like, and prays in silence. It is unnecessary to record all his subsequent acts—the bending down and touching the ground with his nose and forehead, the rising up and crossing his hands over his girdle, the kneeling, the sitting upon his heels, the rising up again, et cetera. Scrupulous care is taken as to the relationship of one foot to another, of the right hand to the left, as to the exact spot for the forehead and nose to touch the earth, with their distance from the soles of the feet; and many other "bodily exercises." The prayers, we were given to understand, are all of a stereotyped form, and consist of confessions, and short sentences acknowledging the greatness and the attributes of Deity, with episodes regarding the authority of Mahomet. What strikes one is the serious, abstracted countenance of the worshipper, which seems to be unaffected by anything taking place around him any more than if he were alone in the desert. It is reckoned a great sin to disturb a man at his devotions.

One of the most reverential worshippers we saw, whose very beard seemed to be an Eastern religion embodied in hair, was an old man on the deck of an Austrian steamer. It was some weeks later in our tour, but we may do honour to the respected devotee now. One of our companions, always full of the "charity which believeth all things," directed my attention to the reverence of the man. Then began, as often happens in such cases, a discussion regarding the different outward circumstances in which a real life of piety may exist and manifest itself, like light in the midst of darkness, or like a plant growing under a stone, which ended with sundry speculations as to the mysterious connection between devoteeism and devilry—mere forms of religion without religion itself. We all agreed, however, that this person seemed to be of the true sort, sincere and honest, though ignorant. So when he rose from his knees we were disposed to be very civil to him, and lent him a binocular glass to study the landscape, with which he was greatly delighted. But the good old man stole the glass, and it was only recovered after a search by the steward in his travelling bundle, where it was wrapped up in an old sheepskin. He seemed quite aware of the theft, and skulked off, not without fear of subsequent punishment, which, however, was not inflicted. He was a thorough type of formalism.

But to return to our railway journey. By far the most notable objects we saw before reaching Cairo were two grey triangles rising over some palms to the south, and piercing, wedge-like, the blue sky: they were the Pyramids. We reached Cairo in the evening, in time to enjoy a golden sunset with burnished clouds rising from the horizon of the Delta to the zenith. Except in peculiar circumstances, such as the presence of snowy peaks or masses of ice to reflect the light, sunsets increase in splendour with an advance to the north. Those of St. Petersburg are unsurpassed. The finest I ever saw at Venice even, were far inferior to them in brilliancy and variety of colour.

We went of course to Shepherd's Hotel.* To get clear of the railway terminus, however, was by no means easy. The crush of donkey-boys, omnibuses, carriages, and camels, with the crowd of nondescript characters, raised such a storm of sound and such clouds of dust and of doubt, as made the "situation" for a moment bewildering. But once in the hotel, we are again in Europe.

"Shepherd's" is a huge barrack in an open space, with trees and gardens in front. No position could be more agreeable. It has before the door an elevated verandah, approached by a few steps on each side, and forming quite a drawing-room tent in the open air.

* An admirable hotel has since then been opened in Cairo by an English company (1868).

Within the hotel is a handsome dining-hall, and in the stories above there are broad stone-flagged passages or corridors, which seem to be infinite, and to go round the world; and opening from these corridors are bed-rooms numerous enough to accommodate all travellers, with room to spare for mosquitoes and other more permanent lodgers, though these were by no means troublesome.

The verandah at Shepherd's had its own story to tell, and any man could read it. It is the Isthmus of Suez on a small scale—a traveller's link between India and Europe, with the addition of a few square yards which serve as a platform to connect the invalid homes of the cold north with the heating breath of the genial south. Here one meets young lads who have passed their examination at Addiscombe, dressed up *à la mode*, from canvas shoes to cambric-covered hats. They are, upon the whole, nice, clean-looking fellows, with a gentlemanly bearing about them, and an innocent puppyism, pipe included, which ceases in the eye of charity to be offensive on the verge of the real difficulties in life, which one knows they are about to encounter. Who would refuse a pipe or a snuff to a man before his going into battle? But what care these boys for leaving home! "Ain't it jolly?" No! my boys; I know better: "it ain't jolly," but, as you would say, "seedy." In spite of

all your pluck, I know you have just written to your fathers or mothers with a tear which you would be ashamed to confess, hating to be thought "muffs." You have forced yourselves to declare, for their sakes, "how very happy you are;" yet you would give worlds to be back again for an hour even at home; and would hug the old dog, and almost kiss the old butler. I'll wager that merry lad with blue eyes and fair hair has written to his sister Charlotte, who is watching for the mail, telling her to keep up her heart, for he will very soon be able to return on leave. And he has sent a single line to Jack, telling him that he may have the use of all his bats and guns, and fishing-rods, and whatever he has left behind him: for though he had his little tiffs with Jack at home, Jack, in spite of his this or that, seems now perfection in his brother's memory. And the lad also begs to be remembered, in a quiet, confidential way, to a certain young lady whom he is ashamed to name, but who he verily believes will never marry another, but wait his return from India! God bless the boys! and bring them out of fever and gun-shot wounds to the old folks at home.

Meeting these fresh boys from the West are worn-out, sallow-complexioned veterans returning from the East. Among them are men whose fame is associated only with the dangers of sport with tigers and wild boars, or with

the gaieties of the station. But just as likely among those quiet-looking gentlemen may be more than one who has governed a province as large as England, and been a king in the East, and been almost worshipped by wild tribes whom he has judged in righteousness and ruled with clemency. And they are returning to a country where old friends, who parted from them full of life and hope, are long ago buried; and they will visit "the old home" no more, for it is in the hands of strangers; while such of them as are bachelors will henceforth be frequenters of Oriental clubs, and be known as "old Indians," who are supposed to be peculiar and crotchety. There are few nobler gentlemen on earth, after all, than these same "old Indians!" Look at those two fine specimens with pith hats, brown faces, and long grey moustaches! They are very silent, and look sometimes as if very sulky; but their hearts are sound, though their livers are the reverse; and I respect even their growls, that seem to me like harmless thunder, without lightning, after a long sultry day.

Slowly swinging in that easy-chair is a young man with a pale face and hard cough, while a meek, sweet-looking young woman—his sister, evidently—is reading to him. Near to them is an elderly man, equally feeble, with daughters, as angels, ministering to him. How one sees home friends perusing the letters from such groups,

telling their anxious friends that they are "much better," and begging the mother, or sister, or children, to "hope for the best," for "Egypt is such a good climate, and James, or papa, or sister Mary, is *so* good and patient." Health to them!

Along with those are other sheep in this "Shepherd's" fold—men of cotton and men of iron, who possibly may be sheep only in their clothing, with a little patch of wolf-skin under it, at least when having to deal with the Pasha; men of travel too, who have been poking through every part of creation, and whose tents are all pitched under the trees opposite the hotel, as they intend to start on a journey to Sinai, or whose boat is ready to proceed to Luxor and the Cataracts; Americans of course too, from the North and South, and clergy from the same western land with silk waistcoats and immense clerical respectability; and clergy besides from all lands, some dressed as if descended from the pulpit, and some as if they had never entered it.

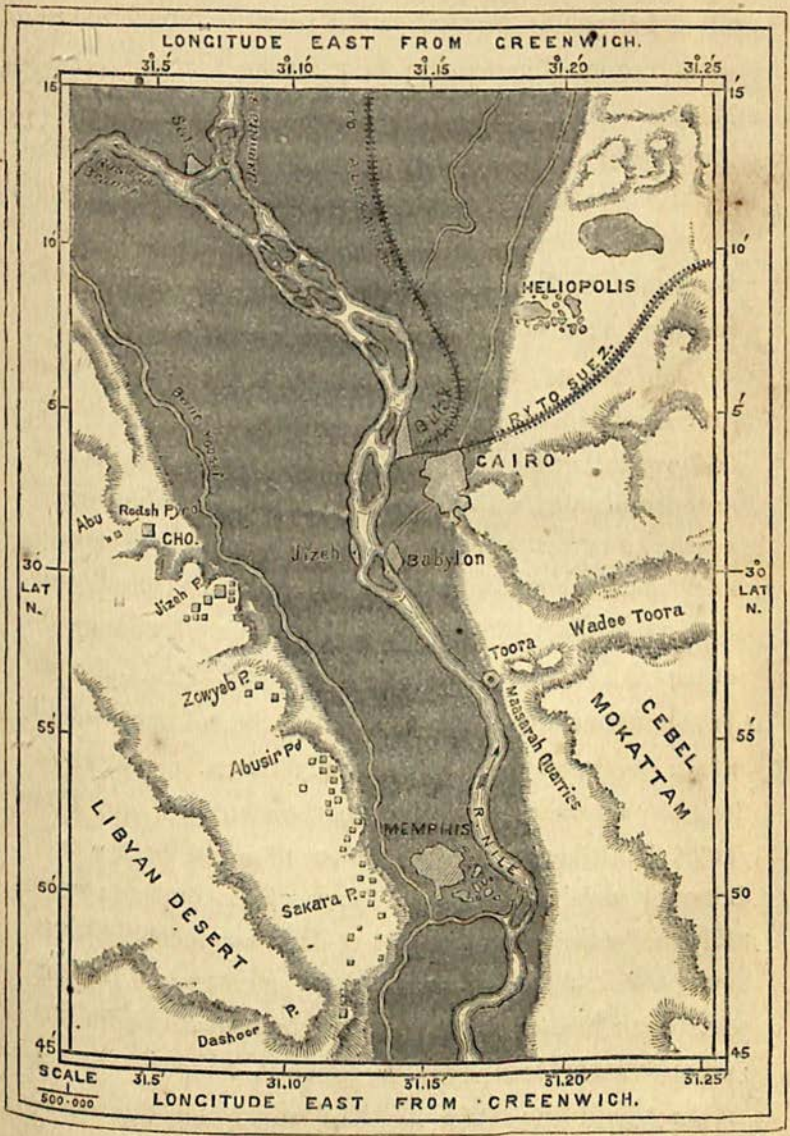
We have some things to see in Cairo, but we must in the first place "do" the Pyramids, and pay our respects to these old mysterious piles of stone in the desert which people were wondering at before Abraham was born.

The donkey-boys who gather around Shepherd's hotel, and seem to be there day and night, make a rush at every stranger who gives any sign of going out to see

the sights. The moment one descends the steps, he has a confused impression of a crowd of round, black faces, mixed with asses' heads; while from all sides proceed shouts and screams of "Very fine donkey," "This donkey be Yankee Doodle," "Dan Tucker," "Jem Crow," "Snooks," "Billy Taylor," "Jack and Gill," or some other name suitable to the supposed nationality or taste of the person besieged.

Mounted on very good donkeys, selected by a nice lad named Hassan, a well-known hanger-on at the hotel, and one of John Bull's "rascals, sir!" we set off for the Pyramids. My donkey was small and strong, but in the saddle I saw nothing of him except his ears. The ride at first is through the scattered suburbs of Cairo. Passing through these we came to a mound of rubbish which, as I was informed, marked the Babylon of Egypt. We shortly after reached the bank of the old river, which swept swiftly on with its brown muddy-looking water.

The first view of the Nile here was to me singularly enjoyable. Indeed the first view of a great historical river is always most interesting. It is one of those features of a country which is as unchangeable as the mountains, and is always associated with its history as the permanent highway of all generations, requiring no repair and incapable of decay. And here was the Nile! It is one of the locks of snowy hair on the old



Map of the Pyramid Field in Egypt.

head of the world. Reminiscences began to crowd upon the mind, from Moses to Captain Speke; and one ever and anon wished to convince himself of the fact that this was really the ancient river of history. Yet all the objects which met the eye and filled in the view were appropriate. There were picturesque boats and palm-trees on the further shore, and over them were the grey Pyramids rearing their heads a few miles off. What more could we ask to make up a real Egyptian landscape in harmony with one's ideal?

After crossing the ferry and traversing a flat plain on the western shore, with villages and groves of palm-trees, we reached at last an open space with nothing between us and the Pyramids. The first thing which strikes one is, not their size, for that cannot be measured by the eye, but the high platform on which they stand. It is about 130 feet above the level of the green flat of the Delta, and in the midst of a pure sandy desert. "I never thought they were among the sand or so high up: did you?" "I thought they would have looked far larger: did not you?" "Where in the world is the Sphinx?" "There she is!" "What! that little round ball rising above the sand?". These are the questions or replies which one hears, if anything be spoken at all, as he moves towards those venerable mounds.

We found the strip of land which separates the

Pyramids from the green valley to be much broader than it at first seemed. It was thus well on in the day when we reached our destination, and the heat was consequently greater than we had made up our minds to. We made for the Sphinx first, and went round and round her. She appeared like a huge boulder rising out of the sand. I did all in my power to realise the calm majesty, the dignity, serenity, et cetera, of that strange creature's expression; but I gave it up in despair. She seemed to me to be an Egyptian Mrs. Conrady, whom no power could invest with beauty. I envy those who can enjoy her smiles. She may have been a Venus in the days of the patriarchs; but a most gigantic smallpox from the battering rams of Cambyses, or the fierce anger of some invader, has destroyed the smoothness of her skin. I regret my insensibility to her charms. But I can't help it. She is still a riddle to me.

We also visited here a tomb or temple, I forget which, called "Campbell's," in honour of Colonel Peter Campbell, once consul in Egypt. It is buried in sand, except where the descent into its interior has been cleared. The huge stones of beautifully polished granite with which it is formed throughout, and which are so exquisitely fitted into each other, are very striking. There are two rows of granite pillars about twenty feet high. Some of the smooth blocks of granite in the wall are thirteen feet

long, by five broad, and four thick. Travellers who have visited the great temples of the Nile would overlook such a small affair as this; but compared with our European buildings or modern Egyptian ones, it is Cyclopean, and made us feel that

> "They dreamt not of a perishable home
> Who thus could build."

The nearer we approached the Great Pyramid, the more it rose upon us as a revelation of majesty and power. When it was proposed to me to ascend it, I agreed as a matter of course; and when one of our party kindly hinted at the difficulty, I looked up to the artificial molehill, and swaggering about my exploits on Highland and Swiss mountains, I expanded my chest, drew myself upright, and pitied the scepticism of my fellow-traveller. The offer of the Arabs to help me up, I rejected with a smile of quiet assurance and contempt. Walking along the base of the structure, which seemed interminable, we got upon the first ledge, and began the ascent. Half-a-dozen bare-armed, lightly-clad, dark-complexioned, white-teethed children of the desert surrounded me—measuring me with their eyes, and jabbering irreverently in Arabic, about my size, I believe: but they ended by volunteering their assistance. Their speech was interlarded with the one word, which constantly occurs, and forms an important portion of the language

of Modern Egypt and Canaan—*backsheesh*. I begged them courteously to leave me: and with an elasticity remarkable to no one but myself I mounted the first step. Having done so, I felt entitled to pause and breathe; for this first step seemed to be a five-feet wall of limestone. To my amazement I found another before me, and another, and another, each of which I climbed, with the assistance, I confess, of the Arabs—two before and three behind—but with a constantly diminishing sense of strength, and an increasing anxiety to know when I should reach those short, easy steps which I had been gazing at from below. I was told that the steps to the summit were all like those I had passed, but I was also told not to be discouraged thereby, as, by hard work, I should be a good way up in half-an-hour; and once up, I could rest, so as to be fit for the descent, which after all was the real difficulty! I gazed up to a series of about 200 stone walls, which, after reaching to an elevation of 120 feet higher than the ball of St. Paul's, were lost at last in the blue sky, and I looked down half-dizzy to the base beneath me. The next wall above me was somewhere about my chest or chin! So, meditating upon the vanity of human wishes, upon the loss to my parish by a vacancy, upon the inherent excellence of humility, the folly of pride and ambition, I then, in a subdued but firm

tone, declared that no arguments with which I was then acquainted would induce me to go a yard higher. I pleaded principle, but strengthened my convictions by pointing to the burning sun and the absence of a ladder. Bidding therefore farewell to my companions, who went up those giant stairs, I begged my clamorous guides, who clung around, to leave me until they returned. The obvious terror of the Arabs was that they would lose their pay; but I mustered breath enough to say in the blandest manner, "Beloved friends and fellow-labourers! sons of the desert! followers of the false prophet! leave me! go round the corner. I wish to meditate upon the past: depart!" And then I emphatically added, "*Backsheesh, backsheesh, backsheesh!* Yes!" They seemed to understand the latter part of my address, held up their fingers and responded, "*Backsheesh?* yes!" I bowed, "Good!" They replied, "We are satisfied!" and vanished. And so they left me some twenty steps up the Pyramid, and looking towards Ethiopia and the sources of the Nile. I was thankful for the repose. One had time to take in the scene in quiet, and to get a whiff from the inexhaustible past in that wondrous spot. The Arabs away, everything was calm as the grave, except for the howls of a wandering jackal that, like a speck, was trotting away over the tawny sand beneath me.

As to what one's thoughts are in such a place, I believe they are very different from those which one would anticipate, or which are suggested by memory in seclusion afterwards. Instead of receiving present impressions, we possibly try to pump up emotions deemed suitable to the occasion. We gaze upon the mountain of stone around us, on the Sphinx at our feet, and on the green valley of the Nile; we recall early readings about the wonders of the world, of travels in Egypt, and stories of the big Pyramid; and we ask, "Are we really here? Are these the things which stirred our hearts long ago?" And then trying possibly to gauge the depths of time since these Pyramids were erected, we place historical milestones a few centuries apart, putting the first down at the period of the Reformation, then jogging up to the Crusades, the decline and fall of the Roman Empire, the Old Testament times, those of Joseph and his brethren, until we reach Abraham. We then look at the big stones about us and say, "These were placed here long before Abraham!" Then we begin to ask, "Who built them? what were they built for? and who on earth was Cheops?" And then possibly some shells in the limestone attract the eye, and we ask, "When were the occupants of these alive?" And we thus get past Adam and Eve, into the infinite cycles of geologists, until at last the chances are that one gets so bewildered

and dreamy that he slides into a speculation as to whether "Shepherd" has packed any soda-water or pale ale for lunch, for it is very hot: or mutters with Byron,

> "Let not a monument give you or me hopes,
> Since not a pinch of dust remains of Cheops!"

It is, after all, very humiliating to think how a slight pain in foot or head, a disagreeable argument, a hot sun, a stubborn donkey, a scratch on the nose, or some trifle, will affect the whole landscape, however grand. I will back a "corn," or a bad tooth, to destroy the glory of the past or present, and reduce all other thoughts to one burning sensation of intolerable pain!

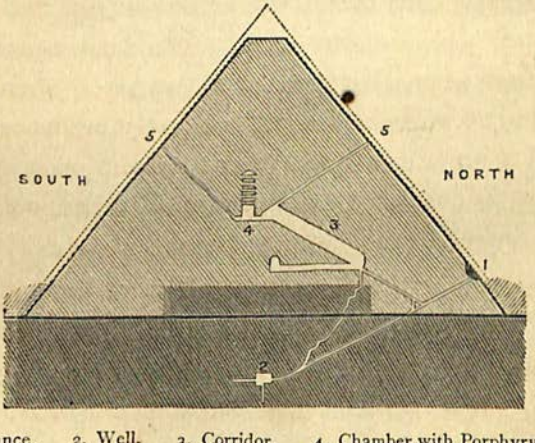
Yet, confessedly, few can escape in such circumstances an awed feeling of vast and unknown antiquity, or fail to hear faint echoes from the tide of human life that chafed against these immortal walls before history began. I doubt not a great part of the charm which fascinates us in such scenes arises from the consciousness of human brotherhood which all historical countries suggest—of the existence long since of beings like ourselves—men who planned and laboured, lived and died, thousands of years ago, but are yet alive somewhere, and with whom, could they only start into life now, we would be able to sympathise. After all, *persons* are the life of this world, and a personal God the life of the universe.

Before descending from my elevated seat let me point out more fully the relationship of the Pyramids to the valley of the Nile, and to Cairo. Imagine the Delta to be, what it often is, a sea, and the valley of the Nile a narrow strait bounded on the east side by low desert limestone hills, and on the west by an elevated ridge of tawny sand. At the entrance of the strait is Cairo on one side, with its clustering monuments in the sun-light, and on the opposite side are the Pyramids, elevated on a beach of genuine desert sea-shore—sharply separated from the high-tide mark of the inundation.

While leaving the Pyramid, the famous passage from dear old Sir Thomas Browne's "Chapter on Mummies" came to my memory:—"Time sadly overcometh all things, and is now dominant, and sitteth on a Sphinx, and looketh unto Memphis and old Thebes; while his sister Oblivion reclineth semi-somnous on a Pyramid, gloriously triumphing, making puzzles of Titanian erections, and turning old glories into dreams. History sinketh beneath her cloud. The traveller as he paceth amazedly through those deserts asketh of her, Who built them? And she mumbleth something; but what it is he knoweth not!"

Here I ought perhaps to insert a chapter about the Great Pyramid, with information derived at second hand from the circulating or more recondite library; for at

first hand I know nothing about it, except what I have revealed. But let me inform a certain excellent lady, in reply to a question which she put to me, and others probably, like her, whose readings on Egyptian antiquities are not more extensive than my own, that the steps I have spoken of are not inside, but outside the Pyramid; and that when built these ledges were all covered so as to present a smooth surface of polished marble, which has been stripped off by sundry Caliphs, and made use of in other buildings.



1. Entrance. 2. Well. 3. Corridor. 4. Chamber with Porphyry Coffer. 5. Air Passages.

SECTION OF THE GREAT PYRAMID.

Let me also remind those who have forgotten their geography, that this big Pyramid is about 480 feet high, and that its base covers thirteen acres. It is not, how-

ever, hollow, but a solid mass of stone, with the exception of one or two small chambers in the interior, reached by passages, opening from one side, and widening to a more roomy corridor before reaching the centre, where the celebrated stone coffer lies. As to the use of the Great Pyramid—for there are dozens of smaller ones in the land—that is a question not yet settled. But it was not built for a tomb, nor for astronomical purposes, nor for idolatrous worship.

No event occurred worth recording on our return journey, except the fall of my donkey—if that has any interest to the intelligent public. The event seemed to be of great personal interest to the worthy animal, and excited in me a certain sense of undignified bewilderment producing sensations which reminded me of early days, and also of increasing infirmities. The transition was sudden and odd, from dreaming about the Pharaohs and the Exodus, to finding one's-self lying beside an ass in the mud of the Delta. The animal seemed to take his fall as a matter of course. I presume it was a sort of duty which he often imposed upon himself on this route, as a last resource to obtain relief from an extra load. After his rest he jogged on, like Peter Bell's donkey, with perfect ease and unfaltering step.

Next day we visited Heliopolis. The ride to it through the country is most pleasant, with the green fields, palms,

acacia, and sycamore trees, and springs of water and water-mills. On reaching it, one sees little with the outer eye, except a granite obelisk with sharply cut hieroglyphics, standing in an open space of tilled fields; which are surrounded by mounds and walls of brick, in which the chopped straw that was mixed with the clay is yet visible. But Joseph—that noblest of men—married a daughter of the parish minister of Heliopolis; and Plato—that great orb of thought—studied at this primeval Oxford. Can any man paint in words the thoughts suggested by such facts? That obelisk was raised one hundred years before Joseph was born. Herodotus saw it when he came to this old university to get information about Egypt. The Pyramids, older still, rise like mountains in the horizon beyond! Near this is shown the tree under which the Virgin reposed on her flight to Egypt with her Son. It was probably planted centuries afterwards. What of that? One rejoiced to be, for the first time in his life, on the traditional track even, of those wonders which fill the earth, and of facts which transcend fiction.

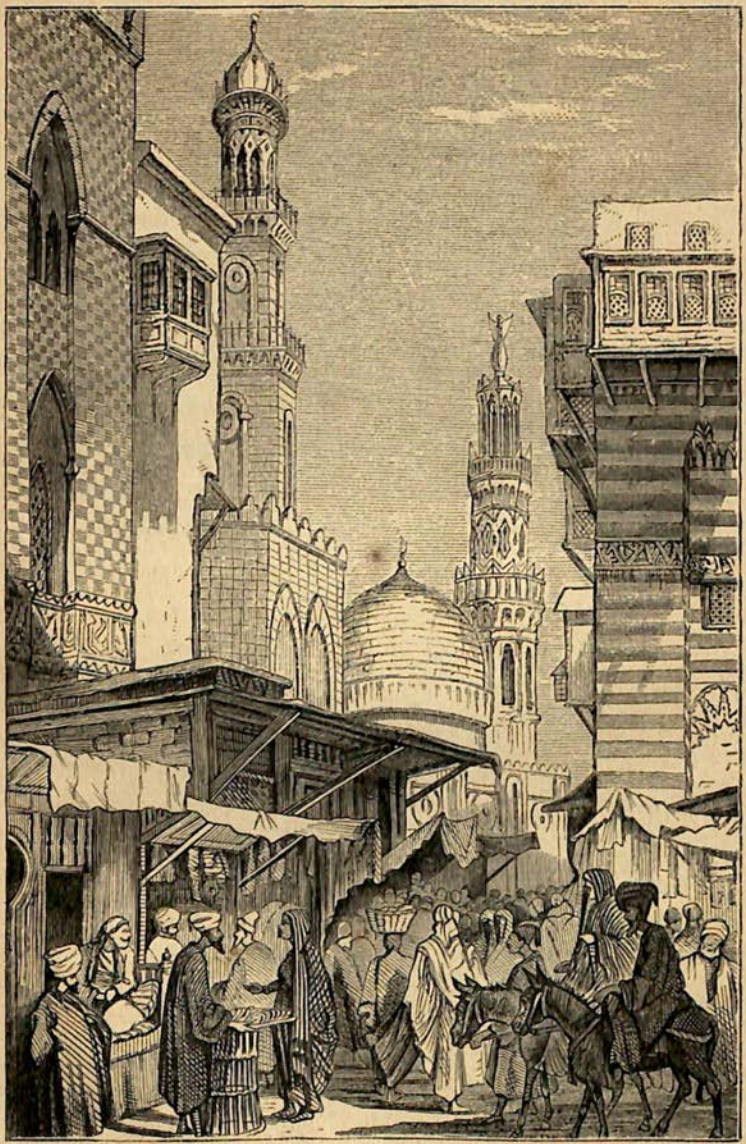
During those short expeditions around Cairo we were, of course, accompanied by our donkey boys, to take charge of their steeds, and belabour or lead them, as required,—all being under the command of Hassan. These boys were with us during three days, under a hot sun from morning till evening, running and jabbering

along the dusty highway like *flibberty-gibbets;* yet though pressed to eat a portion of our lunch—offered by us from sheer pity for their wants—they steadily refused, simply saying, "Ramadan! Ramadan!" It was the annual Mahometan Fast, and no better proof could be afforded of the strictness with which it is kept by the mass of the people. Their principles are not true, but they are true to their principles. They cannot be blamed for eating with an appetite the moment the sun goes to bed, but must be praised for their self-denial during the day. We may safely conjecture regarding them, as an oddity of a Scotch preacher once did of the Pharisee who boasted that he fasted twice a week, "I 'll wager he made up for it during the other days!" But I dare say these supple, all-skin-and-whipcord boys, never enjoyed what a voracious Westerner of the same class would call "a blow-out!"

Let us to the Bazaars. A walk of a quarter of an hour across the open space before the hotel and through nameless streets with little interest save to the Franks, brings us into those crowded arcades of merchandise. They are broader, higher, more aristocratic, and richer than those of Alexandria, and are the most picturesque we have seen. Not so out-and-out Oriental, critics say, as those of Damascus, but, to a stranger who cannot detect the true signs of genuine Orientalism, they are fully more interesting. They are partially covered at the

top with matting or palm-leaves, to keep out the glare of the sun and to produce coolness. Every trade has its own "location," and birds of a feather here flock together, whether gunsmiths, butchers, coppersmiths, or shoemakers, dealers in soft goods or hardware, pipes or tobacco, horse-gear, groceries, carpets, or confections.

The people who crowd these bazaars, in their various costumes of many colours, are always a source of intense interest. The balconies are the most striking points in the buildings, as in some cases they almost meet from opposite sides of the streets; but there is an endless variety of quaint tumble-down bits of architecture, with fountains, and gateways shutting in the different quarters, while the mosques, with their high walls and airy minarets, overlook all. Ever and anon we saw vistas along narrow crowded lanes, and views into back courts and caravanserais, with such groupings of men and camels, merchants and slaves, horses and donkeys, Bedouins and Nubians, mingled with such brilliant colours from Persian carpets and shawls, such bright lights and sharply-defined shadows, as made every yard in our progress exciting, and tempted us to sit down as often as possible on some bench or shop-front to enjoy the inimitable picturesqueness of the scene. A great artist once told me that for three days he tried to settle himself in order to paint in the bazaars of Cairo, but his mind always got so



Street scene in Cairo.

distracted with the richness of his subject that he could never compose himself to his work. No sooner did he resolve to paint one bit than he saw another which seemed better, until for a time he gave it up in despair.

When seated on a bench contemplating the stream of Oriental life which rushed past us, we had what I must call the good fortune to see a very characteristic specimen of an Oriental quarrel. It was between a woman and a shopkeeper. The woman was, like most of her sex whom one meets with in Cairo, obese and dumpy, with the usual veil over her face, which allowed however her flashing dark eyes to be seen glaring like those of a tigress. Her nails, which she seemed disposed to bring into immediate use as weapons of offence, were dyed. She had large ear-rings and other ornaments. The cause of her wrath seemed to be the loss of a bracelet, which the shopkeeper appeared to have seized as security for some debt. But what a picture the two were! They looked into each other's faces, and shouted at the top of their voices without a pause, question and reply being impossible amidst the roar of their vehement indignation. Their rage was not a series of squalls with thunder and lightning, but rather the continued scream of the tornado. They hurried off to the police, and thither, with a small crowd of excited partisans, we followed them. The police, who were

smoking their pipes in a divan under a verandah near one of the gates, rose up, and calmly heard the disputants for a time. The woman demonstrated like a maniac, flung her arms around her, pointed to her bracelet, and yelled; the accused, with forefinger close to the woman's face, tried to yell louder; several men and women took each their part, and all spoke and yelled at the same time, while the leading officer in the centre, joining in the chorus, with hands extended to all parties, yelled at the top of his voice. The discord was made up of screeches without a pause, in harsh and guttural, but apparently most emphatic Arabic. We never saw such a perfect quarrel before, such a thorough exhibition of human passion; yet it was too ludicrous to be horrible, for all this vehemence meant little: it was like that of the sea captain who excused himself for always speaking in a rage by saying that, if he spoke quietly, none of his crew would believe he was in earnest. How the dispute in question ended, I know not; but I am persuaded that both Billingsgate and St. Giles's would have meekly retired from a contest of words with either the hero or heroine of the Cairo bazaars.

But let us go back to our quiet seat on the bench, and, like "Jock the laird's brother" on the louping-on stone, "glower frae us." There is a strange combination of noise and quiet in the bazaars. Both belong to the

East. There are no "cars rattling o'er the stony street," for there are no stones to rattle over. The roadway is hard clay. We are therefore delivered from the loud, grating, harsh European noises of coal-waggons and other vehicles. Here they glide along like sleighs over snow. But the very absence of the noise of wheels necessitates the use of powerful lungs, to warn the moving mass of danger. Accordingly there is an endless shouting of something like this: "Yemīna!" (to the right;) "Shemālek!" (to the left;) "Ducharuc!" (thy back;) "Regalek!" (thy leg;) "Jāmlăck!" (thy side;)—very much like the cries from one vessel to another of "Starboard!" or "Larboard!" to avoid a collision; while the constant "Hoah!" (look out!) is ever heard as a note of general alarm.

We were astonished at the freshness of the atmosphere, and the absence of all disagreeable smells in these crowded streets. Never once were we offended by any one of the two-and-seventy "well defined and several" perfumes which Coleridge has immortalized as characteristic of Cologne. Any abnormal odour which we caught was aromatic and agreeable. I don't pretend to account for this, or to say how far police regulations, the dry atmosphere, or the dogs have the credit of it; but I was informed that, for this town of upwards of 300,000 souls, drainage, in its "social science" sense, has no existence.

As to the dogs which throng the streets, they are a great Eastern institution, constantly present in all its magnitude to the eye and ear of the traveller. The Cairo dogs, as far as I could judge, belong to the same pariah race, in form and feature, as those of other Eastern cities. They are ugly brutes, without any domestic virtues, and without culture or breeding; coarse-skinned, blear-eyed, and scrubby-tailed. They lead an independent public life, owe no allegiance to any master or mistress, not even to any affectionate boy or girl. They have no idea of human companionship, and could not conceive the possibility of enjoying a walk with man or woman, playing with children, mourning a master's absence, or barking wildly on his return home. They are utterly heathen, and never, like our decent sheep dogs, enter church or mosque. No tradition has ever reached them of any of their tribe having entered a house, even as a tolerated beggar, far less as a welcome guest or honoured friend. To have built the Pyramids or reigned at Memphis would not appear to them more absurd than their possessing such aristocratic privileges. They are kindly treated by the public, so far as food goes, yet not as friends, but only as despised wretches, the depth of whose degradation is made to measure the charity of those who deign to show mercy to them. We saw six of them patiently watching a poor man at breakfast.

How low must their self-respect have sunk! Alms, when bestowed even generously, are received without any genial wag of the tail. That appendage has no expression in it: its sympathetic affection is gone. Their political organisation is loose, though a kind of republic exists among them, made up of confederate states,—each state being a particular quarter of the town, and independent of every other. They cannot rise to the idea of *united* states. Thus, if any dog wanders beyond the limit of his own district, he is pursued by the tribe upon which he has presumed to intrude, and is worried until he returns home, to gnaw his own state bones, consume his own state offal, and be supported by his own niggers. These four-footed beasts have no home, no kennel, no barrel even, which they can call their own. A rug, a carpet, or even a bed of straw, is an unheard-of luxury. They live day and night in the streets. Miserable creatures! I don't believe the smallest Skye terrier would acknowledge them as belonging to his race, but, proud as a piper, would snarl past them with erect tail, and a low growl of dogmatic unbelief in the identity of the species, and of insulted dignity at the notion of a return bark being expected from him.

Some people are able, by the power of their fancy, to reproduce in ordinary daylight the Arabian Nights of old El Kahira, or Cairo, as it is called. We think it quite

possible, after some months of total separation from Europeans, devoted to the study and reading of Arabic, and to the smoking of timback in a nargile, that one might reproduce before one's mind's eye the ideal glories of the days of Haroun al Raschid. But for a man going from one railway to another, it is impossible to enjoy the old faith in Aladdin's lamp, to invest any Barber with interest, or to expect to get directions from the Genii, as we do now from "Bradshaw." Yet one evening, when passing through a bazaar, we took a cup, or rather a china thimbleful, of delicious coffee, with its dark grounds as more solid nourishment; and then we had, for a moment, such a glimpse of Eastern life as might, with time and culture, have grown into a genuine Arabian-night feeling. It was a repetition of the scene in the bazaar of Alexandria formerly described, with the difference of a larger café, a more interested audience, and, above all, the fact that they were listening, as former generations had done, to a person reading aloud, with great gusto, stories of a similar kind to those of "The Thousand and One Nights." It was a pleasant sight, and suggested not only romantic thoughts of the past of El Kahira and Bagdad, but, what was of infinitely more importance to me, practical thoughts as to the immense power, which we Westerns have never developed, of good story-telling for the people, illustrative

Woman of the Richer Class Riding.

Walking.

One of the Richer Class.

The Poorer Class.

of minor morals, and of "the thousand and one" every-day details of common life, which should be considered and attended to by them for their physical and social well-being. The deep foundations of life require to be firmly laid, and big stones placed upon them, by heavier and more complicated machinery than this; but many an interstice might be filled up in the building, and many a valuable hint given for its internal economy and comfort, by the lighter machinery of good, racy, vernacular, pointed story-telling, which would form most effective week-day sermons for our people over their tea and coffee.*

* See Appendix No. III.

A Woman of the Poorer Class.

III.

CAIRO AND THE RED SEA.

III.

CAIRO AND THE RED SEA.

I AM not yet done with Cairo: we shall take a glimpse immediately into the mosques. But my narrative, in the mean time, must be broken up, like my journey, by a visit to the Red Sea.

"Tickets for Suez!" What a shock does such a request as this, which we made at the Cairo station, give to all our associations with the desert, and the journeyings of Abraham and Isaac and Jacob! It is as great as if we proposed to take a passage in an excursion steamer on the Lake of Tiberias, or to visit a cotton-mill on the site of the temple of Jerusalem. But if any one prefer to journey on a camel alongside the railway,

he may have one. Dragomen and camel-drivers are always on the *qui vive* to conduct the enterprising traveller to any spot where "the ship of the desert" can sail. Poetry is ever in advance of what is called "progress," though ever present to idealise it when it becomes prosaic. Had time permitted of our choosing between the camel and "first-class," we might probably have chosen the former, and thus obeyed the poetic instinct. As it was, however, we accepted the conventional and swifter mode of travel, and booked ourselves for Suez. I am not sure that the Patriarchs, in similar circumstances, would not have done the same. And why not? A distinguished English prelate, so the story goes, was accosted, when entering his comfortable carriage, by an excellent Mrs. Gamp, who, assuming that comfort and Christianity were necessarily opposed, suggested the delicate inquiry as to what the Apostles would say were they to see one who professed to be their successor travelling in such luxury. "I think it not unlikely," was the meek and wise reply of the worthy bishop, "that they would thankfully acknowledge how much improved the times are since their day!" So we felt, in remembering the past, as we entered the railway for Suez.

We naturally expected to lose all sense of the desert—not once to come under its spell—in our journey through

it by rail. But it was really not so. No railway associations obtruded themselves upon our notice, except the long moving shadow upon the sand. We seemed to be alone in the wilderness, drawn along by a power which, from the very scenery through which we passed, had a strange air of novelty and mystery about it. There were no well-built station-houses, like Swiss cottages, but only wooden huts at great intervals, which stood alone and solitary in the arid waste, without a name to distinguish them from each other in the boundless expanse of sand. They are simply numbered like milestones. Such buildings fail to give any life to the scene, and excite in us only feelings of pity for the hermits who inhabit them, and whose duties consist, not in conning over breviaries, or in helping forlorn travellers, but in adjusting switches and in supplying water and fuel to thirsty and hungry steam-engines puffing through the sweltering heat.

The railway changed the scenery of the desert no more than a balloon changes the scenery of the clouds. Once out of Cairo, we were in the ocean of sand and desolation, as much as a ship out of Plymouth is in the ocean of green water. We passed across the characteristic flinty ground of the real desert; we saw rolling hills of tawny, almost golden sand, like yellow snowhills drifted and smoothed by the winds, and as if never trodden by the foot of man. We saw troops of light

gazelles bounding along with elastic step as they fled in terror from the mysterious monster that rushed snorting towards them from the horizon. We saw in great beauty more than one mirage, fully realising all we had ever heard of its deceptive likeness to large pools or lakes of water, with shores indented by tiny bays and jutting promontories, and with a hazy brightness over them singularly picturesque. We saw strings of loaded camels, with Arabs on foot guiding them, and slowly journeying, as their predecessors had done for thousands of years, along that old route, it may be to Palestine or to Arabia Petræa, or to strange and unknown scenes, or to verdant seas of pasture lands and feeding grounds for goats and camels, with tents pitched round springs of water—spots to which no vacation tourist has yet penetrated, and that remain as they were in the days of Job. And thus the desert was very desert, out and out as it ought to have been, in order to meet the expectations of those more sanguine even than ourselves. On we went, thoroughly enjoying the scene, with no feeling of disappointment whatever. We could certainly picture a more ideal mode of passing through that old romantic waste, but it was impossible to picture a more perfect waste than that which we passed through.

I need not say that as we approached the Red Sea, there were many fidgety movements ever and anon

towards the window from which we expected to get the first look of the famous gulf.

The low range of the Mokattam hills, which stretch east and west from Cairo, and parallel to which we had been moving, began at last to swell and break into more massive forms, like a billowy stream rising into the loftier waves of a rapid. Higher and higher they rose, until we could discern the fine broken outline of what seemed to be the summit of a range of precipitous heights looking towards the east, and plunging into invisible depths. These heights were the northerly end of the range of the famous Jebel Attaka—bordering the Red Sea. As we neared the end of the desert plateau along which we had been wheeling, more and more of the precipices, several miles off, began to disclose themselves, until at last, when we reached the edge of the plain by which the railway descends to Suez, we saw the Red Sea, and beyond—its grey outline marking to us a new quarter of the world—the shore of the Arabian peninsula, in the centre of which we knew Sinai was seated on his throne!

The hotel at Suez is as comfortable as any in Europe; and men of a certain time of life, with their "manifold infirmities," always, I presume, appreciate civilised accommodation. I can quite conceive, remembering my own ignorant and enthusiastic youth, how a member of

the ambitious Alpine Club may sincerely believe that he prefers a bivouac above the clouds on the lee side of a row of stones, with a glacier for his bed-fellow, to a decent bed at three or four shillings a night in a hotel; or how some stray sheep from the fold of civilised life, who has wandered to every out-of-the-way spot under heaven, should glory in a savage hut, or rude tent, or some other form of uncomfortable shelter in which to "put up." I am not disposed to cross-question such travellers about their feelings in a cold or hot night, or in a wet or dusty morning. Let me presume that they always awake in their respective abodes with a high sense of their own manliness and pluck, which must be most agreeable to them, and a full reward for all their sufferings; but let them pardon, while they pity, easy-going gentlemen who prefer number 16, or any other, in the corridor of a hotel, with "John," or "Mohammed," to clean their boots, and to call them at a certain hour in the morning.

Such was our felicity at Suez.

But "ancient founts of inspiration" were not wanting, as we ascended at night to the house-top, and in the deep silence saw the moon which looked down on Moses and the host of Israel pouring its effulgence over the Red Sea, and as we also perceived, afar off, the "everlasting hills" which had witnessed one of the most profoundly interesting events in history.

As for things of the everyday present, there was a comedy announced for the evening, to be acted by the employés of the P. & O.—the Peninsular and Oriental Company—not a theatrical one!—and very well acted it was. It so happened that among the audience I soon discovered old acquaintances, and others allied by the ties of common friendships. I need not specify who these were, for such matters are personal and without general interest; but I must except one, who reminded me of our meeting in the West Highlands thirty years before. He was then one of the handsomest men I had ever seen (don't blush, Major, if you read this?), and a good man, of an old family withal. Since then he has had many adventures. One of these fixed him in a house built somewhere in the desert between Sinai and the sea, where he employs the Bedouin to gather turquoise from the surrounding district, for sale. He has made friends of all the tribes, conveys supplies for his wants on camels' backs from Suez, shows kindness—like "Staffa," his chief and hospitable uncle, before him—to every traveller, and leaves upon all who have the pleasure of knowing him, the impression of what some people call "a real gentleman," others a "thorough good fellow." If "Eastward" ever penetrates to "them parts" on a camel's back, its author greets thee, thou Sheik of the Turquoise!

I met here also our excellent consul, Mr. Colquhoun, an old acquaintance, from whom I had received letters of introduction to the Continent thirty years before. His situation I do not envy, but he will ever be the man of heart and honour. Our gallant friend, with big head and heart, Colonel M—— of the Guards, with his better half, we will rejoin in Palestine.

It is a pleasure which a clergyman often enjoys, that of meeting, in the most unexpected places, persons to whom he has ministered somewhere or other. They kindly introduce themselves to him, as they ought to do for the gratification thereby afforded to him. Such happiness I had at Suez, and those who caused it may thus learn that their kindness was appreciated.

On the afternoon of our arrival at Suez—to go back a few hours in my story—before the play and all our brotherly meetings began, having a few hours of daylight, we wished to improve them, not by examining the Israelites' passage of the Red Sea, but by bathing in the Sea itself. So we went from the hotel towards the gulf, and were fully convinced that the town of Suez, in spite of its 8000 inhabitants, is a place not worth examining; that the bazaars have nothing but what is commonplace in them; and that this centre point between East and West is, like a true geometrical point, in itself nothing.

We proceeded to the quay built by the French, which

extends about a mile into the sea, and along which a railway is being constructed. It is intended to lead to a dock and harbour near an island further down the gulf. Here I can imagine the "intelligent reader" stopping me to inquire about this railway and the Suez Canal:—"Is it likely to succeed? Is it commercial or political? Have the French humbugged John Bull, as they always do? or is the whole scheme a gigantic failure? Are our civil engineers right in their calculations and in their condemnation of it as a mechanical impossibility? Do you think," &c. Now, I must confess, in honest truth, that I cannot give any one reliable information on this subject. All these points which the supposed inquirer moots, and many of a like nature, are questioned and debated in Suez by most intelligent men, just as much as in London. One hears the same difference of opinion in both places.

"It will and must pay!" asserts boldly a man with a moustache. "Why, they have already in their town, which I have visited, such a hotel!—such elegance and comfort, such——"

"Bosh! my dear Tom," cries another, "the whole thing is a bubble. No ships will ever take the trouble to beat up the Red Sea in order to go by this canal. And how can any amount of water make the desert productive?"

"Why," retorts a man who knows, as he says, "the whole thing," "my belief is that the sweet water, that is, the fresh water, of the Nile—which, remember, they *have* brought, and were the first to bring to Suez—will convert the ground along its whole course into as fertile soil as the Delta; and my conviction also is that it *will* and *must* pay."

"We shall see, as the blind man said!" murmurs the doubter.

"These French," chimes in a hitherto silent listener, "you may depend upon it, are uncommonly clever fellows, and wonderful engineers; and my own opinion is, that unless they had good grounds for hoping to end successfully, they never would have begun at all; and what they have actually done is confessedly more than what was ever anticipated by any but themselves. I have no doubt whatever that a water communication of some sort for vessels, larger or smaller, will be opened, and that very soon too, between the two seas."

"The rascals want Egypt—that's the whole thing. It's a political dodge, and no mistake," argues a contemplative listener, with his legs upon a chair, and his eyes and cigar pointed up to the roof.

"I don't care a fig," exclaims another member of the self-constituted canal committee, "whether they get Egypt or not! I defy them to be more selfish than this Pasha.

We shall have our own route to India, ere long, by Antioch and the Euphrates, and let them have this one if they like."

This is the sort of talk, with more or less information and wisdom, which one hears at Suez.

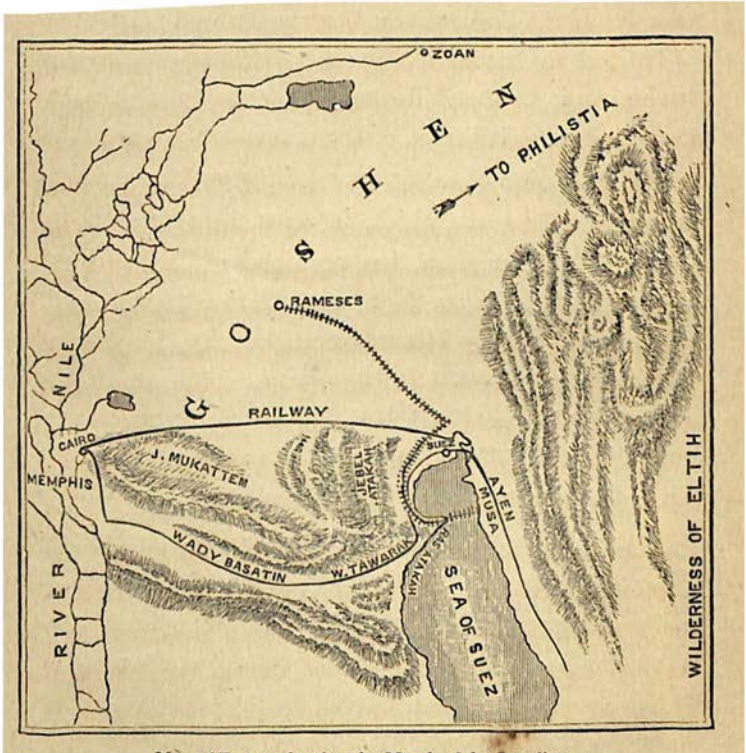
It was a glorious morning when we started at early dawn for "Ayoun Mousa," or the Wells of Moses, some eight miles or so down the Red Sea from Suez, and situated on its eastern shore. The air was fresh and breezy, the sky cloudless and full of subdued light from the rising sun, whose beams fringed with gold the heights of Jebel Attaka. One of our companions, pointing to the mountain ridge which glowed like a kindling bonfire, remarked, "If the worship of Baal had any connection, like that of his companion Astaroth, with the sun, or if he was always adored in 'high places,' then surely Baal-Zephon, 'over against' which the Israelites camped, was one of those burning summits."

Our boat was very roomy, clean, and comfortable, and had a seaworthy look about her. She was manned by several very civil, intelligent-looking, and active Arabs. We had some difficulty in getting quit of the shoals and into deep water. The crew, walking from bow to stern, along the gunwale, pushed her onwards with long poles, cheering each other (as most of the human race do when

engaged in combined physical labour) by singing, if one can dignify by such a term their melancholy chant. Their words, though genuine Arabic, sounded to our ears exactly like "I see a whale, oh!"

We got at last into deep water, and the lateen sail having been stretched to the breeze, we cheerily bore away for our destination. It was something worth travelling for, voyaging for, and paying for, to be thus launched on the smooth waters of the Red Sea. The spot is hackneyed to many, but was new and most joyous to us. We were now on the unbroken track of those scenes of Bible story which had been familiar to us from infancy, and had mingled, during life, with so many of our holiest thoughts and associations. Somewhere near us was the place where "the Church," having been delivered, by the mercy and power of its great King, from heathen bondage, began its marvellous history, as the chief instrument in His hand in giving freedom to the world. It was impossible for us to avoid recalling the leading events of that drama, the wonders of which Horeb saw the beginning and the ending; the mysterious meeting of Moses with "the angel in the bush;" the "programme," so to speak, then given to him, of all that was to take place in Egypt connected with the Exodus, and which he afterwards rehearsed to the representatives of Israel; the journey of the two old brothers, Moses

and Aaron, the former fourscore years, to the court of the mighty Pharaoh at Zoan, that Satanic embodiment of self-will without love; the subsequent dread contest between



Map of Egypt, showing the March of the Israelites.

the kingdoms of the world represented by Pharaoh, and the kingdom of God represented by Moses; the fierce dismissal of Moses by Pharaoh, "Get thee from me;

take heed to thyself; see my face no more; for in that day thou seest my face thou shalt die!" with the solemn reply of the old man, alone and solitary save for the presence of his God, "Thou hast spoken well; *thou shalt see my face no more!*" Then followed the gathering of the people in Goshen, after months probably of preparation, during the infliction of the successive plagues; the awful destruction of the firstborn of Egypt; the appointment of the Passover, which, in some form or other, by Jew and by Samaritan, has remained until this day;* until at last they began their march, having first received, as was predicted by Moses, tribute from the kingdom of the heathen, when the hitherto despised slaves were not only permitted to go, but entreated to do so on any terms. Their victory was complete: their supremacy was acknowledged: the enemy was spoiled!

Up to this point the narrative in Exodus is sufficiently clear. But what of the crossing of the Red Sea? It may seem presumption in me to offer any opinion upon what has been so frequently discussed, and on which

* The paschal lamb was eaten (a small portion, a single mouthful probably, by each person) by *the males only above twenty-one years of age;* and it would not require many lambs for such a sacramental feast, more especially if by "house" is meant, not a habitation, but a family or clan. These and other points in the narrative are very well discussed by my friend the Rev. George Sandie, in his 'Horeb and Jerusalem.'

the most learned critics and most truthful men differ. But like most of those who have preceded me in this journey, I could not help forming some opinion on the point in dispute; and I take the liberty of expressing it very briefly.

That the children of Israel crossed the Red Sea on their way to Palestine is, I must be permitted to assert, one of the most certain facts in ancient history, and has ever been embodied in the holy songs, traditions, and memorial ceremonies of the Church of God. It is, moreover, now generally admitted that Goshen was on the Delta, and that Rameses, on its eastern side, about thirty miles from Suez, was the starting-point of the vast caravan. But if so, the pilgrims never passed up the narrow valley of the Nile, from Goshen to Memphis, from thence to turn east to pursue their journey by the Basatien route to the Red Sea, south of the Ras Attaka.* This theory is utterly untenable. It is quite clear from the narrative, that their shortest, easiest, and, as it were, natural road to Palestine lay between the head of the Gulf of Suez and the Mediterranean, thence along the coast of Philistia. We are told,

* My brother, minister of Linlithgow, who was one of our party, had, on a former journey to Jerusalem, *viâ* Sinai, travelled from Cairo to Suez by this route, and had no doubt regarding its impracticability for the Israelites.

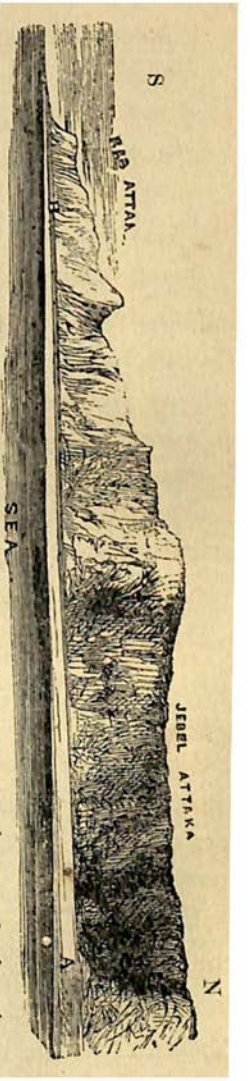
however, that "God led them *not* through the way of the land of the Philistines, although that was near; for God said, Lest peradventure the people repent when they see war, and they return to Egypt. But God led the people about, through the way of the wilderness of the Red Sea." So at last they found themselves, some days after leaving Rameses, *with the Red Sea between them and their destination*, encamped "before Pi-hahiroth, between Migdol and the sea, over against Baal-Zephon," wherever those places were. The *facts* which we have to deal with in the narrative are, that somewhere or other they were obliged to cross the Red Sea; that they did so; that the sea stood up in heaps, or like a wall, on their right hand and their left, by the power of God exercised at the word of Moses; and that Israel escaped, while the whole Egyptian army was drowned.

Can we now-a-days on any good grounds settle where that crossing took place?

Some hold that the narrow portion of the gulf immediately above or below Suez meets the conditions of the narrative. With great respect for those who differ from me, I think not. It is not two miles broad, and is so very shallow that at low water it can be crossed by camels. Nor is there any reason to think that it has been materially changed during the historical era, since the remains of the old canal of Sesostris can still be traced

from the Nile to the present head of the gulf. Making full allowance also for what could have been effected by ebb tides, of which there is no mention in Exodus, and for east winds, which could not divide deep water, it is more difficult to account in that case for the destruction of the Egyptian army than for the deliverance of Israel.

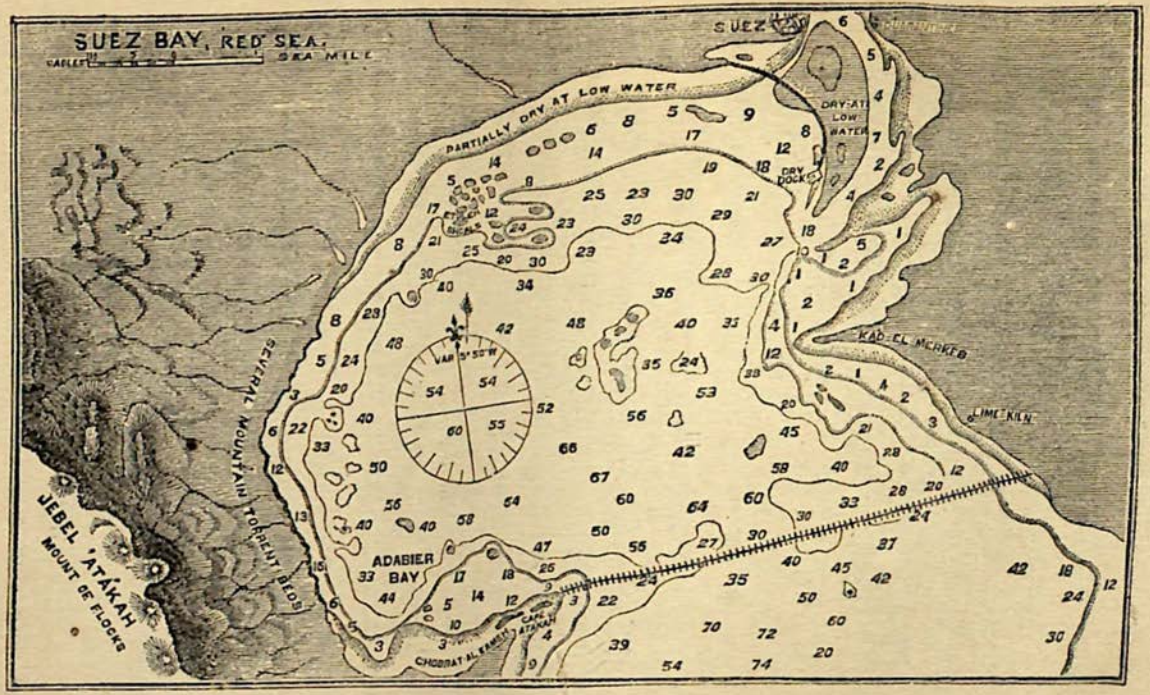
As we sailed down the gulf, and gazed at the formation of the western shore, the narrative appeared to us, as it has done to many on the same spot, to receive interpretation. Along that western shore there is, as we have said, a range of wild precipices, forming the "Jebel Attaka," which is the "butt end" of the Mokattam hills. This range rises abruptly from the desert in the north, and is from 2000 to 3000 feet above the level of the shore. It runs for about nine or ten miles along the coast, and, looking at it from the sea, has the contour delineated—partly from memory—in the accompanying sketch.



Between these wild, rough, broken precipices, impassable by human foot, and the sea, there is a flat plain several miles broad at its northern end (next to Suez), which narrows towards the point, or "Ras Attaka," where, at a spot called by the Arabs, Wady-Edeb, it is of the breadth of from one to two miles. Now, on the supposition that the Israelites encamped on the plain marked B, A, no wonder that Pharaoh—seeing them in such a position, flanked by precipices to the right, the deep sea to the left, with an amphitheatre of steep bluffs shutting them up to the south—should exclaim: "They are entangled in the land, the wilderness hath shut them in!" Forming a *cordon* in their rear, with his 600 war chariots stretching between the Attaka and the sea, he would feel secure of his prize, and might say, as Napoleon did of the English at Waterloo, "At last I have them!" They seemed to all human appearance to have been caught in a trap from which there was no deliverance. "They were shut up," says Josephus, "between the mountains and the sea—mountains that terminated at the sea, which were impassable by reason of their roughness."

In their despair the "children of Israel cried out unto the Lord!" and the Lord delivered them.

How did they escape? We read that "the angel of God, which went before the camp of Israel, removed,



Suez Bay and the Red Sea.
N.B.—The figures in this Chart indicate the soundings in feet.

and went behind them; and the pillar of the cloud went from before their face, and stood behind them: and it came between the camp of the Egyptians and the camp of Israel; and it was a cloud and darkness to them, but it gave light by night to these: so that the one came not near the other all the night." What effect this had on the several details of their deliverance, we cannot fully estimate. Then the children of Israel were commanded to go "forward!"—but not necessarily at once across the sea, opposite the north end of Attaka, but to advance towards the "Ras," or point to the south, where the head of the vast column would begin its march from shore to shore—the cloud, like a rear-guard, hindering in the mean time any attack by Pharaoh. We further read —"the Lord caused the sea to go back by a strong east wind all that night." Now, whatever other purposes this wind was intended to serve, yet as the gulf runs north and south, an east or a north-east wind could *not* blow the waters southward *out* of the gulf; but, as we noticed by placing our compass on the shore opposite to Jebel Attaka, any wind from the east would drive the water for a considerable distance off the shallows, which stretch from the eastern shore, and thus have the effect of narrowing the channel, and of leaving the deep sea only to be miraculously divided. If the divided portion lay between the Ras Attaka and the opposite plain on

which the Wells of Moses are situated, the distance, minus the sands left dry, would be about six or seven miles. If the reader will glance at the sand-banks and soundings along the supposed route from shore to shore, he will see that they suggest the possibility of there having been a greater bar of sand across the gulf in former ages.

As to the *time* which was occupied by the passage, it does not seem quite clear from the narrative that it was one night only. The succeeding events are thus recorded, without reference to the usual punctuation or arrangement into verses :—

"And Moses stretched out his hand over the sea.

"And the Lord caused the sea to go back by a strong east wind all that night, and made the sea dry land.

"And the waters were divided.

"And the children of Israel went into the midst of the sea upon the dry ground.

"And the waters were a wall unto them on the right hand, and on the left.

"And the Egyptians pursued, and went in after them to the midst of the sea, even all Pharaoh's horses, his chariots, and his horsemen.

"And it came to pass, that in the morning watch the Lord looked unto the host of the Egyptians through the pillar of fire and of the cloud, and troubled the host of the Egyptians, and took off their chariot wheels, that they drave them heavily : so that the Egyptians said, Let us flee from the face of Israel ; for the Lord fighteth for them against the Egyptians.

"And the Lord said unto Moses, Stretch out thine hand over the sea, that the waters may come again upon the Egyptians, upon their chariots, and upon their horsemen.

"And Moses stretched forth his hand over the sea, and the sea

returned to his strength when the morning appeared; and the Egyptians fled against it; and the Lord overthrew the Egyptians in the midst of the sea.

"And the waters returned, and covered the chariots, and the horsemen, and all the host of Pharaoh that came into the sea after them; there remained not so much as one of them."

Now there is nothing, it appears to me, in these words, to contradict the supposition that the sea was divided on the morning immediately after the stormy night; that the advanced guard of the host, which lay encamped along the plain north and south, then began from west to east to cross the gulf near the Ras Attaka; that the march of the whole body continued all that day and the succeeding night; so that not until the watch of the second or following morning, when the rear-guard of the Israelites was emerging out of the depths, and the cloud had passed with them to the opposite shore, did Pharaoh at last move in pursuit. He must then have marched some miles "into the midst of the sea," as his whole army, attempting to return, was overthrown.

If the Israelites thus crossed, from the "Ras Attaka" (or "Point of Deliverance"), they would emerge on the grand plain immediately opposite, in which the "Wells of Moses" are situated. To effect all this we have of course assumed the existence of God's almighty power, moulding the lower kingdom of nature to advance the higher spiritual kingdom.

Such were the impressions made upon us by the land and the book—when seeing the one, and reading the other on the spot. But while we are gazing on the Jebel Attaka in silence, broken only by conjectures and suggestions, our boat, with her ear down, is listening to her own music, as with flowing sheet we stand in for the sandy beach.

The tide had ebbed before we approached the shore near Ayoun Mousa, so the Arabs had to carry us to the dry sand. The trustworthy Ishmaelite to whom I was assigned, strange to say, complained of the ecclesiastical burthen that was laid upon him. It was in vain that I hugged him affectionately round the neck, and with all my might too, while he staggered with me in the sand. He seemed insensible to my kindness, and discharged me into Asia with a half grunt, half groan, as if I were a sack of coals. But these Arabs are an ignorant and degraded race!

The walk along the sandy shore excited in us all the feelings of boyish curiosity and eager love of acquisition. Had we seen the shells, which were new and beautiful, lying on cotton in a cabinet, we might have been indifferent to them; but to gather them *in situ*, to pick up small sponges too, to wander free amidst this museum of conchology, and to pocket whatever we fancied, had peculiar fascination about it. I could have wandered

along that beach for days, gathering shells, while the crisp waves of the sea rippled over the shallows. It was on the sea-shore what "nutting" is in the woods.

We had to walk for about an hour across an utterly flat, barren, and sandy plain. This may have been the spot on which the Israelites entered from the sea, and where Miriam beat her loud timbrel, and sang that magnificent ode of victory which, like an echo from the Rock of Ages, is repeated in the song of Moses and the Lamb.

The Wells create a small oasis in the desert. Dr. Stanley calls them the Brighton of Suez, inasmuch as its more aristocratic inhabitants take up their abode there during the summer. This gives as melancholy an idea of Suez, as one would have of London if its inhabitants preferred the Isle of Dogs for a summer residence! The Wells nourish a few gardens, with shrubs and cotton plants, and produce a certain amount of cultivation most pleasing to the eye in this arid waste; and, if repose be sought for, they must afford it in abundance to those who wish to escape the roar and bustle of Suez.

Before turning away from the Wells of Moses I gazed with a wistful eye along the track which, losing itself in the sandy downs beyond, led on to Sinai. What one would see in a few days, if he pursued that route—the Wady Feiran, Serbal, Sinai, with the silent plains, the

coloured rocks, the buoyant air, the awful solitude and mystery of the desert, so full of stirring memories, and Petra too, and Mount Horeb, and onwards to Hebron and Jerusalem! It is a holy pilgrimage from glory to glory, yet one which never, alas! can be pursued by me. Thankful, however, for all I had seen, and hoped yet to see, I bade farewell to Arabia, and retraced my steps to the boat, from which the tide was rapidly ebbing.

When crossing the plain to the sea we met a lanky camel led by his driver, and we resolved, like boys visiting the elephant at a "show," to have a ride. It would be a new experience, gained on a fitting spot, and would enable any novice of our party, ambitious of the honour, henceforth to exclaim, "I, too, have ridden a camel in the deserts of Arabia!"

So the animal was made to kneel, and in performing the operation he seemed to fold up his legs by a series of joints, as one would fold a foot-rule. The "Djemel" makes it a point of honour, when any burden whatever is laid on his back, to utter sounds which may be intended for Arabic groans, sighs, protests, or welcomes, but are certainly unlike any other sounds proceeding from man or beast. Only an angry lion, trying to roar when suffering from sore throat, or with a bag of potatoes stuck in his gullet, could approach to the con-

fused, fierce, and guttural ejaculations of the camel. When kneeling for his burden, as well as on other occasions, even when walking quietly along, he suddenly blows out of his mouth what seems to be his stomach, to air it, just as a boy blows a soap-bubble from a short tobacco-pipe. Amidst the gurgling growls of my kneeling friend, I got mounted, and was told to hold hard, and take care! There was every need for the caution. The brute rose, not as I expected on his forelegs first, but on his hind, or rather on only their half—as if on hind elbows. This motion throws the rider forward, when suddenly the animal elevates himself on his knees, and, as one naturally bends forward to prepare for the last rise in the same direction, he hitches up the other half of his legs behind, and then as suddenly repeats the same experiment with his legs before, until, shaken and bewildered, one is thankful to find himself at rest high above the sands of the desert, rather than prostrate upon them, among the camel's feet. Then began that noiseless tread, with the soft spongy feet, which, however, is more remarkable in its silence on the stony streets than on the shifting sand. The rocking motion, when yielded to, was not unpleasant.

I cannot part from Arabia, and my first and last camel ride on its plains, without expressing my admiration for that old animal which is often abused by travellers, and

which fills some people, as I have heard them say, with feelings of disgust. I will not affirm that the creature commands immediate admiration, but I think he inspires immediate respect. The expression of his soft, heavy, dreamy eye, tells its own tale of meek submission and patient endurance ever since travelling began in these deserts. The "Djemel" appears to be wholly passive —without doubt or fear, emotions or opinions of any kind,—to be in all things a willing slave to destiny. He has none of the dash and brilliancy of the horse,—that looking about with erect neck, fiery eye, cocked ears, and inflated nostrils,—that readiness to dash along a racecourse, follow the hounds across country, or charge the enemy,—none of that decision of will and self-conscious pride which demand, as a right, to be stroked, patted, pampered, by lords and ladies. The poor "Djemel" bends his neck, and with a halter round his long nose, and several hundredweight on his back, paces patiently along from the Nile to the Euphrates. Where on earth, or rather on sea, can we find a ship so adapted for such a voyage as his over those boundless oceans of desert sand? Is the "Djemel" thirsty? He has recourse to his gutta-percha cistern, which holds as much water as will last a week, or, as some say, ten days even, if necessary. Is he hungry? Give him a few handfuls of dried beans, it is enough; chopped straw is

a luxury. He will gladly crunch with his sharp grinders the prickly thorns and shrubs in his path, to which hard Scotch thistles are as soft down. And when all fails, the poor fellow will absorb his own fat hump! If the land-storm blows with furnace heat, he will close his small nostrils, pack up his ears, and then his long defleshed legs will stride after his swanlike neck through suffocating dust; and, having done his duty, he will mumble his guttural, and leave, perhaps, his bleached skeleton to be a landmark in the waste, for the guidance of future travellers. If this creature be a development from some primeval oyster or mushroom, or the work of atoms which, at an earlier age, once floated in empty space near, it may be, where Saturn or the Pleiades now are, we can only admire the extraordinary sagacity, by which, according to the laws of selection, monads and atoms all contributed, during countless millions of years before the oyster age, and from the oyster age downwards, towards building this fine old ship of the desert, which has needed no repair since the beginning of human history.

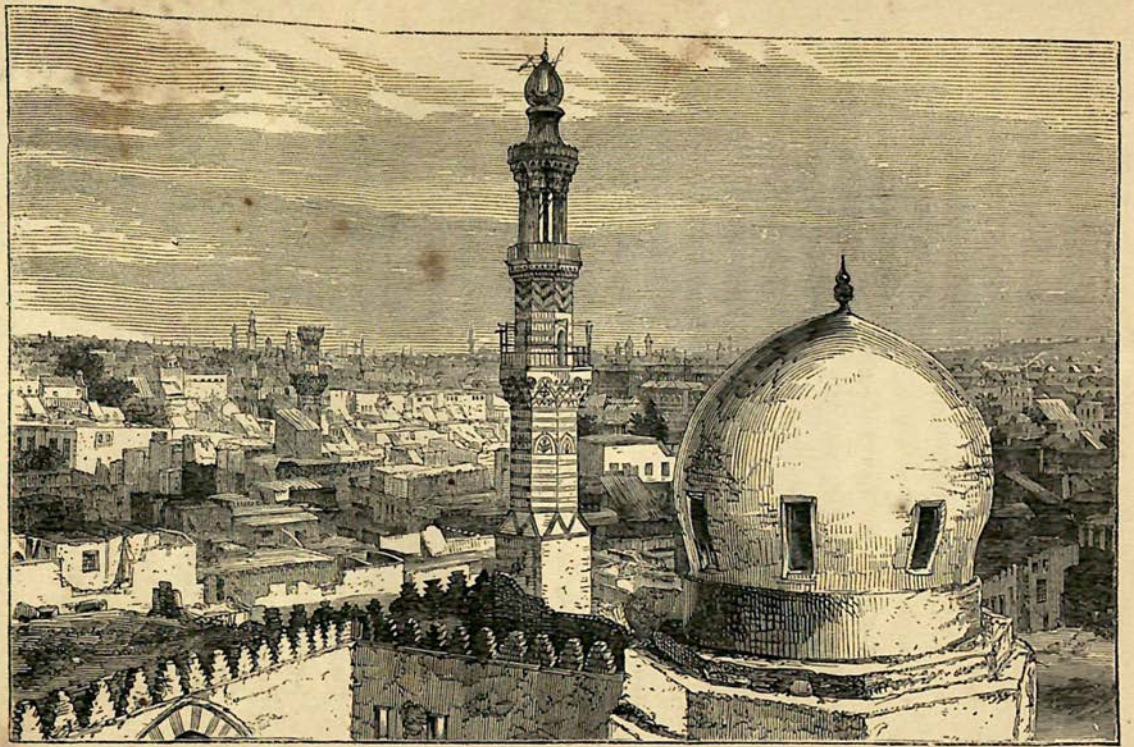
But we must return to Cairo. Thanks to that great magician, that Fortunatus' cap, the steam boiler, we were able in one day to sail from Suez to the Ayoun Mousa, ride on the "Djemel," return in the afternoon to Suez, and that same night to arrive in Cairo. No doubt we

almost missed the train, one minute more would have done it, but fortunately we saved the minute, and were speeding again through the desert. It is very easy for idle gentlemen, who seem to have as much time at their command as the antediluvians, to condemn busy men for taking such rapid journeys to visit spots which they would never otherwise see. If their own bliss be measured by slowness of travel, why don't they walk on foot or ride on a donkey's back through Europe?

Sincerely grateful for rails and steam, we reached Cairo at night, and so secured another day to see a few sights, and especially the mosques, ere we left the "City of Victory."

As to the mosques, which I promised to look into, I need not attempt to describe their external appearance, as the illustrations of them in Fergusson's Architecture, or "Murray," will give a better idea of this than any words could do. In its interior, the mosque always struck me as a most impressive place of worship. Perhaps my Presbyterian prejudices dispose me to acquiesce in its perfect simplicity. No statues or pictures are permitted in it; and no seats of any kind are required for people who prefer the floor, which is invariably matted or carpeted, thus giving it, to a European, an air of comfort. Almost the only sign of furniture in it is a pulpit or two from which the people are addressed

occasionally by the Moolah. The mosque is always open I believe, and is seldom without some worshippers, while at stated times during the day it is well attended. The utmost decorum and reverence are everywhere visible; no hum of voices is heard, nor even footsteps, nor is there anything visible which can distract or arrest the attention of the worshippers. People of every class scatter themselves throughout the vast area, each man selecting a spot for himself where he can kneel towards the "Mirhab," or niche which indicates the direction of Mecca, and seem as much absorbed in his duty as if he were in a desert island. Some are seen sitting cross-legged, and engaged in grave conversation; while others walk soberly up and down. The whole service, judging of it only by what one sees, gives the impression of worship to an unseen God, which must, when first established, have presented a remarkable contrast to that of the Christian Church as it then was; and it certainly is a very different thing from that which at Luxor or Karnac once reigned supreme, with a Bull or Beetle for its God! Mahometanism owes its origin to Judaism and Christianity; and we who live in the full blaze of the true light, are apt to undervalue the good obtained from its dimly reflected beams, which, in some degree, irradiate spots that otherwise would be outer darkness.



CAIRO, WITH THE RUINED MOSQUE OF TAYLOON.

I must pass over many other sights in Cairo. "If time permitted"—as public speakers say at a late hour—I could gossip about the magnificent tombs of the Caliphs, the citadel, and the splendid view of the city from its walls, with the mosques and busy streets at our feet, like Mahometan ant-hills, and with the hazy Lybian desert, and the Pyramids on the distant shore beyond the dark inlet of the Delta;—and tell about the well-known spot where the one Mameluke Bey escaped from the bloody massacre of all his fellow-chiefs, by the fearful leap of his Arab steed over the wall of the fort; and I could describe —no, that is impossible!—the horrid, death-like place outside the walls where animals are slaughtered in the open air, and where the vultures crowd around,—Faugh! let us pass on!

A Turkish bath seems to me to be a most fitting conclusion to sight-seeing like this, in such hot weather too. I know not as yet what that institution may be in London, but having endeavoured to enjoy the luxury in three places—Moscow, Cairo, and Damascus—and all of them being much alike in their essential features, I frankly confess that I have no wish to try the experiment again in "foreign lands." The description of one—though I cannot quite separate in my memory some of the details of the Cairo and Damascus hot-water-and-soap establishments—will serve for all.

We inquired for the best bath in the city; and our intelligent guide, Hassan, the sheik of all the donkey-boys about Shepherd's Hotel—a man who from his intercourse with the English, is assumed to have some knowledge of Western civilisation—assured us, as we were about to enter one of those boiler-houses, that it was the best in Cairo, where "all de lords Inglese go." We bowed and entered. The outside looked very shabby. The first room was a large apartment with an uneven floor, flagged with stone—marble of a sort, I believe. It wore a singularly liquid look, and had about it a general air of hazy, foggy damp. Hanging from the roof were innumerable long sheets drying. One end of the room was elevated, and was reached by a few steps; and on this upper floor was a series of couches, seemingly very clean, on which the half-boiled bathers reclined, smoking nargiles, and radiating forth their heat into space, thereby producing dew. To this dais we were led, and requested to undress. The genius of the place appeared in the form of an old man, evaporated into skin and bone, with a solitary tuft of hair on his head, a wet towel round his loins, and his whole body dripping. I started when I saw him,—I did not know why, until I recognised in him the image of Father Time as pictured in tracts and almanacks, but fortunately wanting the scythe. Delivering our valuables to the care of a patriarchal

individual who sat cross-legged in a corner, we were wrapped in a sheet, and led out by Time, accompanied by a scarecrow attendant, who from his long legs might represent leap year. We put on wooden shoes, and passed over heated slippery stones into another apartment, which was so hot that one felt a tendency to become browned like toast, or to bubble over the skin. This sensation subsided gradually into a pleasing dewy evaporation. We were then conducted to a large open vat full of water, which to us had two objections: one was that it was intolerably hot, the other that it seemed already full of donkey-boys and their friends,—the head of Hassan in their midst, grinning above the surface. But, inspired by the determination to go through with all the horrors of this sudoriferous den, we clenched our teeth, tried to imagine ourselves chimney-sweeps, and jumped in. In due time, when sufficiently saturated, we were put in a hot chamber and laid on the floor, with cockroaches, or what the Scotch call "clocks," crawling over it in dozens. There we lay, like turbot or cod about to be dressed for dinner. By and by we were soaped from toe to head, lathered with soft palm-tree fibre, then had tepid, and afterwards cold water poured over us, and then a monster began to crack our joints and shampoo us! He succeeded with my companion, who yelled, as the Egyptian, in fits of laughter, seemed to put every limb

out of joint, and to dislocate his neck. But when the same Pharaoh tried me, his arms fortunately could not meet around me, so after a violent struggle, in which I fought desperately and tumbled about on the floor like a salmon which a fisher tries in vain to seize round the body, he gave it up in despair, and, for the first time probably in his life, wiped his forehead from fatigue, as he exclaimed "Mushallah!" After sundry other minor appliances, having the same end in view—that of opening the pores of the skin—we returned to the apartment from whence we had originally started, and were there gently dried by a series of warm sheets being laid upon us. Hassan spread his carpet and said his prayers. The sensation after bathing was very pleasant, no doubt, but not more so, nor calculated to do more good, than what most cleanly disposed people experience daily from the application of hot and then cold water, accompanied by the well-known substance, soap, in their quiet bath-room at home.

Doubtless I felt light and elevated when I got out, but feelings as pleasant can surely be produced without being scrubbed like a pig, rubbed down like a horse, boiled like a turkey, exhibited like a new-born infant to the curious, and without also a donkey driver for your C.B. !—and all this with no other consolation than the assurance that the pores of your skin are open forsooth—like the doors

of a public institution! For my part, I prefer them closed—or at least ajar.

We had one thing more to do ere we left Cairo for Palestine, and that was to hire a dragoman. There were many applicants. These men are constantly prowling about the hotel: they scent the prey afar off, they meet you in the lobbies, sidle up to you under the verandah, tap at the door of your bed-room, beg pardon in French, Italian, or English, all equally bad; ask if you "vant a dragoman;" produce an old book of certificates signed by the various parties with whom they have travelled, and profess to be ready to proceed with you at a moment's notice to Jerusalem or Timbuctoo. Dragomen are, by the catholic consent of all travellers, considered as scoundrels. But I am inclined to dissent from this, as from most sweeping generalisations regarding classes of men. It is alleged of a Scotch traveller that, when told at Cairo by his companion that they must get a dragoman, he asked, "What kind o' beast's that?" Now I know that some travellers have started on the assumption that the dragoman is but a beast, though a necessary one for the journey: and from want of confidence have suspected, accused, and worried him, threatened him with appeals to the consul, and such like, without any adequate cause, and thus have helped to produce the very selfishness and dishonesty and "want of interest in the party" which they accuse him of.

It is a dragoman's interest to be civil and honest; so I believe it to be quite possible for any intelligent traveller, with some assistance from the better informed, to make, sign, and seal, before starting, such a tight bargain as,—with a promise of a reward, if satisfied, at the end of the journey,—will make imposition to any appreciable extent impossible. But the indolent traveller, who has abundance of money, often begins by spoiling his dragoman, and then ends by abusing him for being spoiled, and for having taken advantage of the reckless expenditure and careless accounts of his master.

Hadji Ali, who was employed by the Prince of Wales on his tour, offered himself to us, and was accepted. He came, it must be confessed, with a character sadly shaken by his last employer, Lady ——; but after investigating, as far as we could, the whole circumstances of the case, we made our bargain with the Hadji, and had no cause to repent having done so. He agreed to conduct our party of five from Jaffa to Damascus and Beyrout, at the rate of thirty shillings a day for each, during one month. Others, strongly recommended to us, refused to go under forty shillings, owing to the sudden rise in the price of cattle and provisions consequent on the murrain in Egypt. Our contract was written by my brother, who had experience in the work, on Friday, and Hadji agreed to be on board of our steamer at Alexandria on Monday, with

all his camp equipage. And so, having settled that important point, we left Cairo on Saturday for Alexandria, gratefully acknowledging that we had never in one week seen so much to interest us, or to furnish thought for after years. We bade farewell to my old kind-hearted friend, Mr. Dunlop, Vice-Consul,—since transferred to Cadiz,—a man who will make many friends, and no enemies, wherever he goes. We saw no other "sight" in Egypt which impressed itself on our memory, except the crowd of Turks which, like a bed of tulips, filled the third class, each man having a beard and turban which might form a study for an artist. The whistle screeched with its usual impatient violence, and we moved off for the sea, leaving behind us Shepherd's Hotel, full of the homeward-bound from India, and the tombs of Egypt, fuller still of the Dynasties of Manetho!

IV.

JAFFA.

IV.

JAFFA.

WE embarked at Alexandria on Sunday evening* in a Russian steamer which was to start at early dawn for Jaffa. When I say *we*, I do not at present use the editorial, or the modest "we," instead of the too personal and

* We had thus the happiness of spending another Sunday at Alexandria with our good friend the Scotch minister, Mr. Yuille, and of again assisting him in his services in the harbour on board his 'Bethel' ship (presented to the Church of Scotland Mission by the late Pasha) and of preaching to his congregation on shore.

Travellers, I fear, are too apt to form an estimate of the value of missionaries in foreign cities only from the number of "conversions" of the heathen or the unbelievers among whom they are settled. But without at all underrating this great branch of their work, let us not overlook, as we are apt to do, how great a privilege it is to Europeans themselves—to the wandering traveller, the resident merchant, the young clerk far from home, the sailor visiting the port,

obtrusive "I." It is intended to express the party which embarked at Alexandria to visit Palestine together.

Now one of the most difficult practical problems which a traveller has to solve, is the choice of the companions who make up the "we." His comfort, the whole atmosphere of the journey, the enjoyment from it at the time and from its memory afterwards, depend in a great degree on those who accompany him. Let him beware of his espousals! A divorce may be impossible for months, and his sufferings in the mean time great. Accept therefore of no man who for any reason whatever can get sulky, or who is thin-skinned; who cannot understand a joke or appreciate a bad pun; who wears the photograph of his wife round his neck, or, what is worse, of one whom he wishes to be his wife; who has a squeaking voice, which he is for ever pestering the echoes to admire and repeat; who refuses to share the pain of his party by paying when cheated; who murmurs doubts about the lawfulness of a glass of beer; who cannot "rough it" and suffer in silence; who has long legs, with knees

the invalid seeking a more genial clime,—to have a simple-hearted, intelligent, God-fearing missionary to visit them in sickness, to advise and comfort them in difficulty and in sorrow, and on each Lord's day to minister to them by prayer and preaching. In our opinion such a missionary is the Christian Consul of the place in which he lives. His value is great, and he deserves the support and encouragement of every right-thinking man.

that reach across a carriage; or who snores loudly. Avoid such a man. Flee from him, if necessary, as from a haunting spectre. What is needed above all else is a genial, frank, free, and cordial companion, with the power of sympathising not only with his friends, but with the spirit of the scenes and people among whom he moves. The feeling with which a man gazes for the first time on some famous spot, like Jerusalem or Tiberias, colours the whole afterthought of it. Let a fellow-traveller at such a time strike and keep up a false note, the whole music is changed into discord, and so echoes for ever in the ear of memory.

Now I state all these qualifications with greater confidence, inasmuch as "our party" was unexceptionable.

The steamer was very comfortable, but very slow. There was no forcing her even in smooth water up to eight knots. The captain was a short man, round as a barrel, and with a bullet head, like a seal's, covered by shiny black hair. He was very civil, in his own official way. The vessel was one of a line which unites the coast of the Mediterranean with those of the Black Sea.

It was crowded with "pilgrims," coming from Mecca I believe, though I cannot be positive as to their *terminus à quo* or *ad quem*. What interested me most on here meeting, for the first time, with a freight of pilgrims, was their great numbers and their strange habits on

shipboard. They were spread everywhere over the decks in family groups, leaving only narrow paths barely sufficient for sailors or curious passengers to move along without treading on them. They lay huddled up in carpets and coverings with the sort of quiet submission to their position which good Europeans manifest in yielding themselves up to death and the grave. Whether they slept, meditated, or were in utter unconsciousness, it is difficult to say; for during most of the day few seemed to attempt to move or shake themselves loose from their place of rest. When the sun shone bright in the morning or evening, and the ship was not uneasy, there was a general rising up of turbans like flowers from the variegated beds of a garden. Nargiles were then produced, lights were passed, bags, handkerchiefs, or other repositories opened, and bread, with figs, garlic, or some other condiment, divided by the old bearded Turkey cock and his hen among their young in the nest around them. It was marvellous to see, as we noticed afterwards on longer voyages than this, how little suffices to satisfy the wants of Orientals.

The one half of the quarter-deck was tented with canvas, and set apart for the more aristocratic portion of the pilgrims; but, except for the darting out and in of some young black-eyed girl or slave who supplied them with water, the long tent was as still as the grave. So

still, indeed, did some of those Easterns keep, so submissive and patient were they under all pressure of circumstances, that on one occasion when I went to enjoy the quiet and the fresh breeze at the vessel's bow, and sat on the fore jib, which had been hauled down and stowed, I sprang up in alarm on finding it to move under me. I discovered to my horror that I had been sitting for some time on a Moslem! He survived the pressure; nay, smiled at my expression of alarm. I hope he has not suffered since.

We had one passenger on board who was of some importance—the ex-Duke of Modena. He was on a pilgrimage, as we were told, to Jerusalem, where we afterwards met him. He was a quiet, courteous gentleman, unaffected in manner, and wearing a saddened look, which, knowing the change in his social position, could not but excite our sympathy. It is easy to blame a ruler for what was done or left undone by him while in power; but few of us can know or understand the whole world of circumstances and surroundings, ecclesiastical, political, and social, in which such a ruler has been placed from infancy, or the gifts and capacities given him by God, so as to form any righteous judgment regarding his personal guilt or innocence. We pitied the Duke for his loss of Modena, although not Modena for the loss of the Duke, who was of great service to us, in

securing an excellent table for the passengers while on board. The captain wore his Russian orders, and the cooks and stewards obeyed them; so, what with the Duke and the orders, there were great dignity and good dinners. If Dr. Johnson, that authority on morals, deemed it right for a man on land to pay attention to what must be done thrice every day, who can blame a man at sea for paying attention to his meals when he has little else to concern himself with all the day long? It is surely inconsistent to pity the sick man who dispenses, in more ways than one, with his food, and at the same time to blame the strong man who enjoys it? We again acknowledge our gratitude to the Duke of Modena.

We had other passengers who contributed to make this short voyage a very agreeable one. There were Messrs. Thompson, Ford, and Bliss, with other excellent American missionaries; and our friend Colonel M—— with his lady and party.

We were rather doubtful as to where we should be put ashore, for the landing at Jaffa is not always to be depended upon. There is no port for the steamer to enter; and if the weather be at all rough, boats cannot leave the harbour: and should they be able to do so, there is often much danger in entering it again, as the passage through the reef of rocks is very narrow, and boats are apt to ship

a sea from the breakers, and thus be swamped. The next landing-point is Caipha, or Haifa, under Mount Carmel, and this, we believe, can be entered in any weather. But it is an inconvenient point of access to Palestine, as it compels the tourist who wishes to see the north and south of Palestine, to retrace his steps northward after visiting Jerusalem — unless he varies his journey by travelling southward along the plain by Cæsarea to Jaffa. We ourselves would much prefer, if Jaffa failed, to go on to Beyrout, see Damascus, &c., and travel south, embarking at Jaffa. Fortunately the weather was propitious, and the Duke of Modena was anxious to reach Jerusalem by the shortest route. This settled the case in favour of Jaffa, or old Joppa.

On the afternoon of Tuesday we were approaching the Holy Land, and straining our eyes to get a first glimpse of its everlasting hills.

The sun was setting as we descried the long low line of the Palestine coast. It had set when we blew off our steam, a mile or so from the shore. The twinkling lights of boats were then seen like stars coming towards us, and soon the port officials stood on deck demanding a clean bill of health; and this being produced, boat after boat came clustering to the ship's side. Then arose an indescribable Babel from the screeching of their crews, who

seemed engaged in some fierce and deadly strife of words, which was itself an interesting study, until, after a while, amidst the roaring of steam and of voices, we were by degrees carried along over the side and down to a boat, in a current of sailors, Turks, Arabs, passengers, portmanteaus, dragomen, and travellers, while officers and captain were at the gangway acting a pantomime in despair, vociferating Russian louder than the steam, stamping their feet, grasping their hair, and appearing half apoplectic with their efforts to be heard, yet able at intervals to command a smile for the comfort of the Duke of Modena. It was a great relief to be off from the ship's side (though more than once I thought unpleasantly of Jonah) and to pull for the old shore.

I do not know whether there is a more convenient landing-place at Jaffa than that by which we passed from sea to land. I have a faint memory that some one told me there was a stair. I hope there is; for if not, that one difficulty might form a more formidable barrier to some travellers than a high mountain pass. Our landing-place was a shelf of wood projecting overhead, under which our boat was brought, and from which a dozen hands of unknown and, in the darkness, dimly visible Arabs, were stretched down to help me up. I was quite alive to the "slip between the cup and the lip," but somehow, though not without difficulty, I was

dragged to land, and found myself in Palestine. I cannot say that I was wanting in emotion, yet it was emotion in no way kindled by the spot I trod upon, but by the villanous crowd who surrounded me, forcing every thought into one uncontrollable desire to be delivered from these Philistines. With thanksgiving I heard my name shouted by my old friend Dr. Philip, to whom I had written from Scotland, and who was waiting for me to guide me to his hospitable home, about a mile from the town. He had a horse ready for me; so leaving our dragoman—of whom more anon—and all my friends, except Mr. Strahan, another old acquaintance of our host, we immediately proceeded to "the Mission Farm." We soon got clear of the town, and then as we paced along on the yielding, sandy road, with a rich aroma perfuming the air from orange groves and other odoriferous trees, the fact began to dawn slowly upon me that I was at last really in the Holy Land and treading the Plain of Sharon; and so in silence, and with deepest gratitude, I followed our leader in the way.

It was a great happiness and blessing to enter that house; to meet happy children at the door; to hear their merry, innocent voices echoing through the vaulted arches of that Eastern, yet English home. Bachelors do not understand the fascinating poetry of children. A father only, as he gathers them about him, and gets the

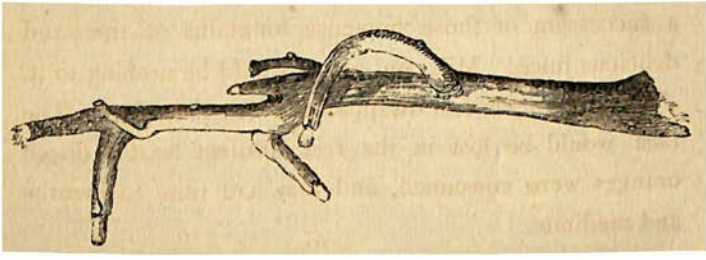
young ones on his knees and tells them stories, and looks into their pure and beautiful eyes, and hears them tell all that interests them—which the *Times* would care nothing about—can understand the refreshment to the spirit of getting quit of hotels and steamers, of the fever of ceaseless movement, of sight-seeing, and of the bore of acquiring accurate information about things nearly as old as creation,—a father only can understand the pleasure of this, and of once more being among "the bairns." Blessings be on the sweet group at the Jaffa farm!

I ascended the house-top alone at night, and then—how could it be else?—the delightful feeling grew upon me—"I am in Palestine! This is no dream!" Little could be seen except the stars, which scintillated in the calm brilliancy of an Eastern night. To me they were for a time exclusively Palestine stars, and part of that landscape only. The "plough" alone connected me with home, and I felt a friendly Scotch feeling to it. The deep silence of the night was broken only by the sea, which came booming in low hollow sounds from the shore, as it did in the days of Jonah, or as when heard by Peter while journeying from Jaffa to Cæsarea along the old sandy tract which passed near our dwelling.

Early next morning we went to Jaffa, and then for the

first time I saw "the Land" under the full blaze of the sun. The atmosphere was delicious, and the sky cloudless. The first impression made upon me, as upon every traveller, was the marvellous richness, the orchard-beauty of the neighbourhood. The path wound between rows of cacti (the *opuntia*), or prickly pears, varying from three or four to fifteen feet in height; and one could not help pausing to look at their great soft fibrous stems fringed with leaves (?) resembling thick green cakes or "bannocks" stuck with needles, and forming a defence through which the breeze can pass in full volume, but quite impervious to man or beast. The gardens of fruit-bearing trees are the glory of Jaffa. There are endless groves of oranges and lemons, apricots, pomegranates, figs, and olives, with mulberry and acacia trees, the stately palm towering above them all. I was informed that there are about three hundred and fifty gardens around this old town, the smallest being three or four acres in extent, the largest ten or twelve. Of these gardens two hundred and fifty have one well, and about a hundred two wells each. Each well employs about three animals, who work day and night for six months in the year, and draw each about one thousand cubic feet of water in the twenty-four hours. This gives one some idea of the "water-privileges," as the Yankees would say, of the Plain of Sharon; and I believe the same abundance of

water is procurable from the whole of the Philistian plain, which accounts for its present fertility, and, to some extent, for its ancient wealth and the number of its inhabitants. About eight millions of oranges are grown every year in the gardens around Jaffa. Several hundreds are borne by a single tree, and are sold wholesale at an average of little more than three-pence the hundred. In retail, ten are sold for a penny in Jaffa. An orange-grove gave me the idea of rich and luxuriant fruitfulness



more than any other sight I ever beheld. The number of oranges which can hang from a single twig is remarkable. The accompanying engraving is an exact representation in all respects of one I broke off with four adhering to it. The size, too, of the fruit is extraordinary, averaging ten to twelve inches in circumference, while some reach seventeen inches. Even the apricots, we were informed, sometimes attain the size of fifteen inches. The colour, as well as the size of the fruit, and the immense clusters which loaded every tree, made the grove

much more impressive than the vineyard, in spite of all its hanging bunches of luscious grapes. We saw them harvesting the fruit. It was carried by merry boys and girls, in large basketfuls, and laid in heaps. I confess that my first thought was what a paradise this would be for our Sunday-school children on their annual holiday. What a luxury to be allowed, not to suck the sour fruit purchased with their only halfpenny from a barrow in the street, but to bury their whole face, gratis, in a succession of those immense fountains of ripe and delicious juice! Milk and honey would be nothing to it. *They* would never feel disappointed with Palestine! The ideal would be lost in the real, until at least a dozen oranges were consumed, and they had time to breathe and meditate.

The only disappointing thing about an orange-grove, or any garden which I saw in the East, was the roughness of the ground. It is cut up into trenches for the purpose of irrigation. Velvety grass exists not; this would make the retreat perfect.

Outside of the gate of Jaffa was a place I would have liked well to have lingered at. It is a large open space, vanishing into the country, and filled with all the picturesque Oriental nondescripts to whom I have alluded in former pages, and who, from crown to heel, had to me an undying interest. To the usual crowd which was ever

moving in that open space, with camels, donkeys, horses, and oxen, were added troops of horses which for weeks and months had been constantly passing from every part of the country along the plain, by the old road to Egypt, *viâ* Gaza, to supply the immense losses sustained there from the murrain. Most of those we saw were very inferior cattle, and represented but the dregs of the land, yet they were selling at high, and, for the East, exorbitant prices. The strange-looking characters that accompanied them represented the lowest conceivable grade of horse-dealers: their faces being a study for the physiognomist as well as the artist. We preferred studying them by sunlight rather than moonlight.

The first place in Jaffa which the traveller naturally desires to visit is the traditional house of Simon the tanner, in which the Apostle Peter lived. A portion of it at least is evidently a modern building, but if it is not the old house, it is nevertheless well worth visiting from the characteristic view which is obtained from its flat roof. Standing there, I felt myself for the first time brought into local contact, as it were, with those persons and facts in Gospel history with which every Christian is familiar—which occupy the everyday thoughts and most solemn moments of a minister's life and teaching, and which, as he travels through Palestine, seem to become incarnate, to pass from written pages and to clothe them-

selves in the visible garb of material scenes; to be brought down from the world of spirit and of abstract truth into the real world in which they once lived and moved, only from thence to be raised again and made more real and living in the thoughts than before. It is associations like these, constantly suggested by the objects which every hour meet the eye and stir the memory of the traveller, that make the land "holy," sobering the mind, and investing every day with the hallowed sunlight and atmosphere of the Lord's day.

But to return to the house-top at Jaffa. The house is close to the sea-wall, and looks to the south. The whole landscape, as seen from the roof, is instructive. Along that winding shore, and not far from the town, tanners still ply their trade; and they may have done so since the days of the Apostle. Tanworks, if they existed at all, would probably be always where they now are, from the fact that a current steadily sets along the coast from north to south, which sweeps the refuse of the works clear of the town and small harbour, while it would have had the opposite effect had the works been on the north shore. Simon's house, wherever it stood, may have passed away, but at least one fact suggested by it remains for our strength and comfort—that our angel brothers who minister to the heirs of salvation, are not strangers to our earth and its inha-

bitants, nor to the situation of our lowly homes, or the nature of our "honest trades;" for the angel who commanded Cornelius to send for Peter, knew this old town of Jaffa, and knew also the name, the house, and the trade of Simon.

The great sea, whose blue waves danced before us in the sunlight, and spread themselves to the horizon to wash the shores of Europe beyond, seemed also to partake of the light shed from the vision revealed to the inner eye of the Apostle when praying beneath this blue sky. He had gazed on this sea, unchanged since then in its features, and unwrinkled by time; but as he did so, he little knew what endless blessings of Christian consolation and of spiritual life were given to our Western world in promise, and let down from Heaven with that white sheet! The lesson thus symbolically taught, filled him with pain as it destroyed his past, but fills us with gratitude as it secured our future.

Nor could we forget, while standing there, that the first link which unconsciously bound the Apostle to Europe, was the person of an Italian; that, at their first meeting, the Roman knelt to Peter, and was rebuked in the memorable words, "Stand up, for I also am a man!" And, remembering all this, the question naturally suggested itself, what that same Peter would have thought if another vision, ascending, we must

suppose, from the earth, rather than descending from Heaven, had pictured to him what future Italians would do and say in his name? And had that vision also represented the magnificent Cathedral of "St. Peter," with a statue of himself as its chief attraction to successive thousands of "Italian bands" who would kneel devoutly before it, it may be further asked, whether he would have recognised in such a spectacle a true expression of his own Christianity, and a necessary "development" of either the principles or practices of the primitive and apostolic Church which he represented? Would he not be disposed rather to say, with the prophet of old when contemplating a similar vision: "So I lifted up mine eyes the way towards the north, and beheld northward at the gate of the altar this image of jealousy in the entry"?

One has also an excellent view of the harbour of Jaffa from this same spot. The coast of Syria has really no harbours—such as we mean by the name. It is a line of sand, against which the inland ocean of the Mediterranean thunders with the full force and volume of its waves. The existence of a few rocky ledges like a coral reef running parallel to the shore, forming a breakwater to the small lagoon inside, has alone made harbours possible—and, with harbours, commerce and direct communication with the outer world. Yet, had these been

more commodious and common than they are, the separateness of the land from the rest of the world (for which it was selected in order to educate Israel) would have been sacrificed. As it is, the balance is nicely adjusted between exclusion from the outer world and union with it. To this small reef of rocks Jaffa, the only seaport of the land of Israel, owes its existence, as well as its continuance from the earliest period of history until the present day. Within that pond, sheltered from the foaming breakers outside, many a vessel lay in peace before even the days of Joshua (ch. xix. 46). Belonging as it did to the tribe of Dan, there "Dan remained in ships" (Judges v. 17). Through that opening, but ten feet wide, to the west, vessels have sailed, and plunged into the deep sea,—Jonahs among them,—for thousands of years. Through the other opening, of much the same size, to the north, have come the floats of cedar trees from Lebanon for rebuilding the house of the Lord. The old town has seen many adventures, and the cry of battle from the wars of the Maccabees, the Romans, the Saracens, the Crusaders, has risen around its walls, and within its houses. The Alexander of modern days, Napoleon, has trodden its streets, and walked in his pride through its Plague Hospital, whether to kill or cure it is difficult to say. The fusillade of that terrible massacre of 4000 prisoners (as it is alleged) on the

sands, echoed for hours among its streets. Yet its history is not so eventful as that of most of the old Eastern towns which survive the wrecks of time.

But we must leave the house-top, and keep our appointment at the hotel to prepare for our journey, which is to begin in real earnest on the morrow.

I have already informed the reader of the important fact, that we had hired at Cairo a certain Hadji Ali as our dragoman. True to his engagement, he had met us on the Russian steamer and accompanied us to Jaffa. "Hadji" was an honourable addition made to the name of Ali Abu Halaua (recommended by "Murray," *alias* my learned and excellent friend Professor Porter, of Belfast), and it represented the fact that its possessor had made the pilgrimage to Mecca. What his motives were in doing so, I do not pretend to know. It may have been in response to his sense of duty, his ideas of piety, or of what might be helpful to him as a dragoman wandering among the tribes of the desert. Be that as it may, we had hired him as the consecrated, saintly Hadji Ali. Now it must be confessed that the Hadji did not look like a saint such as our Western minds conceive one to be. If he was one, he had the gift of concealing the saint and revealing the sinner. But, to do him justice, this revelation was more in an unpleasant sinister twist

of his under jaw, in the bandit look of his gaiters, and in the wide-awake, yet reserved and cunning, expression of his eyes, than in any word he ever uttered, or in any act he ever committed during our journey.

Hadji had made arrangements for the road, and wished us to see our horses, and be satisfied with his selection—a most difficult and important piece of business! We met at the door of the hotel—one of those peculiar Eastern hostelries of which I shall afterwards speak—to make our acquaintance with our future friends, the horses. They seemed a vulgar pack, without breeding or anything to commend them. But after sundry experiments, protests, rejections, and trials of the girths and saddles, we at last selected our cattle, and arranged to start next morning from the Model Farm. I need not say that Hadji wished to impress us with the greatness of the sum which, owing to the dearth of horses, he had paid for the hire of our stud. I had brought an English saddle with me, and it was ordered to be put on a quiet, patient, respectable-looking, ministerial cob —afterwards called, in spite, "the cow."

We retired that evening to "the Model Farm"—so called, by the way, from its being an experiment, supported by Christians in London, to provide labour for converted Jews. It is superintended by Dr. Philip, who acts as farmer and medical missionary. I availed myself

of the opportunity afforded to me of here visiting, without the suspicion of being intrusive or impertinent, a real native dwelling—the house of Mamoud, Dr. Philip's servant. It was what in Scotland would be called a humble "clay biggin'." The fire was on the floor. The furniture consisted of two large—what shall I call them? —jars, three or four feet high, for holding grain, with an orifice at the bottom for extracting it. There was also a quern, exactly the same as those used in the Highlands, and with which, when a youth, I have often ground corn for my amusement. A bottle full of oil hung up in the smoke, in order, I presume, to keep it always in a fit state for the lamp—reminding one of the saying of David in his sorrow, "I am become like a bottle in the smoke." The beds, consisting only of carpets and rugs, were rolled up in a corner.

Next morning our cavalcade mustered, and we saw, for the first time, the *matériel* of a tour in Palestine. As to the men who accompanied us, there was our chief, Hadji Ali, with brown braided jacket, loose Turkish trousers, and long black gaiters or leggings as loose and easy as those of a bishop, but wanting the episcopal gloss and rows of buttons. A bright *kaffia* was wrapped round his head and protected his neck and shoulders. Hadji had a horse, of course, assigned to him, but was always willing to exchange it for the animal which became unpopular

with any of the party. Next to him in dignity and responsibility was "Nubi," or the Nubian. He was our waiter, personal servant, steward, or whatever will best describe Hadji's mate. He was a tall young man, with skin dark as ebony, shining teeth, intelligent countenance, of most obliging disposition, from whom we never heard a murmur. The third class was represented by Mohammed, the cook, excellent as an artist, and most civil as a man, whose sole defect was liability to occasional pains, intimately connected with his digestion, to alleviate which I ministered from my medicine-chest, thereby securing to myself from that time the honourable title of Hakeem Pasha, or chief physician. Then came Meeki, the master of the horse, and also of the mules. Meeki always rode a small ass—a creature which, unless he had known himself to be tough and enduring, would have been an ass indeed to have permitted Meeki to mount him. He was a square, thickset man, with short legs, broad back, and ponderous turbaned head. He rode astride or cross-legged, as it suited him. The human side of his character came out wholly as a smoker of his constant friend the nargile, and as a singer or rather an earnest student of songs, which consisted of little short squeaks full of shakes, and in a minor key. His inhuman side came out in the dogged, fierce, imperious way in which he loaded and drove the

pack-horses and mules. I verily believe Meeki had no more heart in him than Balaam, and as little conscience. He was a constant study to us, whether when packing or unpacking at morn or even, or when trudging along at the head of the party on his wonderful little animal,

Meeki, Master of the Horse. (An original sketch.)

which he so completely covered, that one could see only two small black hind legs pattering along with indefatigable energy over sand and rock from morning till night. Meeki had three muleteers under him, fine active Arab lads, who trembled at his voice. We had thus

seven attendants, including Hadji, with about ten pack-horses and mules. All were needed: for, as I have already said, in a note to my first chapter, there are no roads in Palestine, and therefore no wheeled vehicles, not even a wheelbarrow, from Dan to Beersheba. There are no hotels, except at Jaffa and Jerusalem; everything, therefore, required for the journey must be carried.

We left the Model Farm after breakfast, receiving the adieus of the children, who waved their handkerchiefs to us from the housetop. We were accompanied by their father, who kindly agreed to go with us as far as Jerusalem. The day was beautiful, and the atmosphere exhilarating: so we moved off, across the Plain of Sharon, full of hope for the future and in great enjoyment of the present. We drew up at a grove that formed the outskirts of the gardens, and were made welcome to take as many oranges as we could pocket from the yellow heaps, or what a Highlander would call *cairns*, which were rapidly increasing every minute by the gatherers emptying their basket-loads of the ripe and delicious fruit. To appreciate an orange it must be eaten when taken from the tree and while retaining the full aroma treasured from sun and air. It may have been fancy, but it seemed to me that I had never, except here or at Malta, eaten a perfect orange. We found,

however, that these very ripe Jaffa oranges lost their character in a few days.

We soon debouched on the undulating plain, over which we passed along a beaten track. I do not profess to remember its "heighs and hows," the successive aspects of the country, or the bearings by the compass of "tells" or towns: for here I must confess the fact, that I kept no journal nor took any notes, except in letters to my fireside—a spot unknown in all the East. This omission arose from, I verily believe, mere weariness, and the trouble of writing on horseback while a whole party passed on or waited until my observations were recorded—or the bore of writing in one's tent when the demand for repose, conversation, or reading became imperious. I trusted to the permanence of general impressions, and I am not yet convinced of my having committed any great error in having done so. I therefore bow with humble respect and reverence before careful and accurate observers and all scientific travellers, professing myself to be only a gossip about the surface of palpable things, and a recorder only of what I saw and experienced, and now clearly remember.

We passed in our ride this forenoon the house where some American missionaries were murdered a few years ago. They were very earnest, but, if the story we heard

about them was correct, not very wise or discreet men. We passed also a small hill, or rather mound, called Beth Dagon, where no doubt that fish god had once his foolish worshippers. Then we saw a handsome fountain called, I know not why, after Abraham; and we saw also, after, what were older than Abraham, and what retained all the glory and beauty of their youth—the flowers of the plain. These were always a charm to the eye—a glory of the earth far surpassing that of Solomon. The plains and hills of Palestine are gemmed in spring with flowers. The red poppy, asphodel pheasant's-eye, pink cranebill, mignonette, tulip, thyme, marsh marigold, white iris, camomile, cowslip, yellow broom, &c., are common to the Plain of Sharon, giving a life and light to the landscape which photography cannot yet copy. We saw also, when near Ludd, the well-known high tower of the mosque at Ramleh, three miles off to our right. It is situated on the highest ridge of the plain, and from its position and height (120 feet) it is said to command a noble view of the Plain of Sharon to the north, and of the Plain of Philistia to the south. We lunched at Ludd, the ancient Lydda, where the Apostle Peter cured Eneas of the palsy. As we approached its beautiful trees and orchards, we came on the cavalcade of our friends, Colonel M—— and his party; and such meetings were always cheering. But instead of resting under the trees

with them, we pushed on for the ruins of the church named after England's patron saint, St. George, who was, according to tradition, born and buried here. The church, it is said, was rebuilt by Richard Cœur de Lion. We spread our first table in Palestine under the remains of one of its noble marble arches. An old, bearded Greek Christian visited us, and when some one of our party told him I was a clergyman, he seized my hand and kissed it. It required great faith in the old man to accept the fact of my profession, as I certainly did not wear my canonicals, and from felt hat downwards had no visible traces of the ecclesiastic. He told us many stories about St. George, with keen, believing eyes, bated breath, and uplifted finger. I wish I could recollect them, and had not too hastily assumed that I never would forget such delightful sensation legends regarding the saint; how he was slain, burnt, and beheaded by the King of Damascus, and always came alive again; with the subsequent adventures of his head, which was said to be buried under the high altar. But these legends have passed away from my memory, though they live in the faith of the saint's aged admirer. It has been hinted, however, by some sceptical historian, that St. George was not a very respectable character. I think his Dragon must be meant: charity supports this view. Was it because of some victory gained here by the

Crusaders over the Saracens that St. George was adopted as our kind patron, without, I presume, asking his consent? I really do not know.

After luncheon we pushed on for our camping-ground at Jimsu, which we saw rising like a fortress above the lower hills, as if to defend the passes beyond. The village is situated on a spur of the hills of Judea. We reached it in five hours from Jaffa, including, I think, our pause at luncheon; so that we had an easy day's march.

The first encampment is always a source of interest and excitement to the traveller. We formed no exception to this general experience. Those who associate discomfort with a tent have never lived in one, or it must have been bad, or overcrowded, or, worse than all, in a wet or cold climate. We had two tents; the one accommodating three persons, the other two. On entering the head-quarters and mess-tent, we found the floor spread with rugs; a table round the pole in the centre, arranged for dinner, covered with a beautiful white cloth, and on it two wax candles burning, with ample space round for our camp-stools. Three iron bedsteads were ranged along the sides, and our bags and portmanteaus placed beside them, and everything wearing an air of thorough comfort, even luxury. The other tents, belonging to our suite, were pitched near us: one for the

kitchen, and the cook's utensils and personal luggage; and the other for the general dormitory of the servants, in which Hadji nightly led off the snores. To pitch those tents so as to have them all in order in the evening to receive "the party," it is necessary that the muleteers should start early with them and all the baggage, and push on direct to the ground fixed upon, leaving the travellers and dragoman to follow at their leisure.

An excellent dinner was in due time served up by Hadji, and assiduously attended by Nubi. We had not much variety during our tour, but every day there was more than enough to satisfy the cravings of any healthy, even fastidious appetite. Soup, roast mutton, fowls, curry, excellent vegetables, a pudding, a good dessert, and *café noir*, of first-rate quality, after, cannot be called "roughing it in the desert." This sort of dinner we had every day. And for breakfast, good tea and coffee, eggs by the dozen, always fresh and good too, with sundry dishes cunningly made up of the *débris* of the previous dinner. We had also an abundant luncheon, which the Hadji carried with him on a pack-horse, and was ready at any time, or in any place, to serve up with the greatest nicety. Tea or coffee could be had as a finale before going to bed, if wanted. All this I state to allay the fears of those who may possibly imagine that, should

they visit Palestine, they would have to depend upon their gun or the wandering Bedouin for food. They might as well fear being obliged to rely for entertainment upon the wandering gipsy when travelling between London and Brighton.

When we reached our tents we found a large number of peasant Arabs, from the neighbouring village, assembled. They were very quiet and civil, and did not trouble us *much* about *backsheesh*, although our experience regarding this Eastern impost was daily, almost hourly, enlarging. Every petty Sheik, whether of tribe or village, thinks himself entitled to it; the children clamour for it; their parents support the claim; and in some wady, men with clubs or guns may urge it upon the wayfarer to a degree beyond politeness. But admitting once for all this notorious Oriental weakness, I must also protest against the injustice done to the oppressed descendants of Ishmael, by looking upon them as the only race guilty of levying such an income-tax or "black mail." I fear that it is an almost universal custom, and one not quite unknown among the tribes of the civilised and Christianised portions of the globe, though it may not be so openly practised by them as by the semi-barbarous Orientals. *Backsheesh* reigns supreme in Russia over the peasant and the prince, and is the grand, almost only, passport to the Muscovite

nation. It is known in America, North and South, under the guise of "the almighty dollar." It is the *douceur* or *pourboire* of France, the *trinkgeld* or *shmeir-geld* of Germany, and the *buon mano* of Italy—all being constant sources of irritation to the traveller. The tourist in the west of Ireland must more than suspect its existence among "the finest pisantry in the world," though it takes the form there of a "thrifle, yer honor!" Traces of it are not wanting in England and Scotland. Does the British Arab show ordinary civility?—does he direct one on his road, answer a few questions, devote a minute of his idle time to help you, open a cab door in the city, or a gate in the country? *Backsheesh* is demanded as "sum'ut to drink," or hope of it is expressed by the eye as the hand touches the cap. Does a verger of a church—a sort of Hadji—show you its inside, or point out an illustrious grave within or without it? Neither his piety nor his humanity ever makes him forget *backsheesh*. Does any servant, male or female, belonging to peer or parson in the land—whether represented by the aristocratic "Jeames" or the maid-of-all-work "Susan"—does the groom, butler, coachman, footman, or keeper, who are fed sumptuously, clothed handsomely, and paid liberally, perform any one act of civility towards you without expecting *backsheesh*? What is the British "tip," "fee," "Christmas Box,", "trifle," &c.,

but *backsheesh?* Even while I write, a correspondence is going on in the London *Times*, accusing and defending the head servants (Cawasses) of the West-end nobility (Pashas) for demanding a per-centage for themselves from tradesmen on the accounts paid by their masters, and this because of the servants' patronage; not the patronage of the master who pays for the goods, but of the servant who orders them! What is this but *backsheesh* in its worst form, as a mean and dishonest bribe? Please let us cover with a mantle, or with even a napkin of charity, the demand for *backsheesh* made by the wretched peasantry of the East, until we banish it from our own well-to-do people, and from our own wealthy and aristocratic homes.

The Arabs at Jimsû asked *backsheesh*, and we distributed about sixpence among the tribe. They were satisfied.

But I had provided a talisman wherewith to "soothe the savage breast." I selected it for *à priori* reasons, founded on human nature, before leaving London. Instead of taking powder and shot, I took—could the reader ever guess what?—a *musical snuff-box*, to conquer the Arabs; and the experiment succeeded far beyond my most sanguine expectations. Whenever we pitched our tent near a village, as on this occasion, and produced the box as a social reformer, we had soon a considerable

number of people, old and young (the females keeping at a respectful distance), crowding round us, inquisitively but not disagreeably. When the box was wound up, and the tinkling sounds were heard, they gazed on it with an expression more of awe and fear than of wonder. It was difficult to get any one to venture near it, far less to allow it to touch his head. But once this was accomplished, it was truly delightful to see the revolution which those beautiful notes, as they sounded clear and loud through the Arab skull, produced upon the features of the listener. The anxious brow was smoothed, the black eye lighted up, the lips were parted in a broad smile which revealed the ivory teeth, and the whole man seemed to become humanised as he murmured with delight, "tayēeb, tayēeb" (good, good). When once the fears of one were dispelled, the others took courage, until there was a general scramble and competition, from the village patriarch down to his grandchildren, to hear the wonderful little box which could ring such marvellous music through the brain. We respectfully recommend the small "musical snuff-box" to travellers. Even at sea, when the storm on deck blows loudly, and the waves are rude and boisterous, and the passengers sleepy or unamiable, and reading difficult, and the thoughts not bright, they will find that the box—never sea-sick—wound up and allowed to twitter and tinkle

old familiar airs, will prove a very cheerful companion. But let me warn any traveller following us in our route, should he hear an Arab attempting to sing "Home, sweet home," or "*Ah, che la morte*," not to attribute too hastily a purely Eastern origin to these airs.

I did not find my first night in a tent either ideal or agreeable. The ear was as yet unaccustomed to the heterogeneous noise, which found an easy entrance through the canvas. All night the horses and mules seemed to be settling old quarrels, or to be in violent dispute about some matters of personal or local interest; a scream, a kick, a stumble over the tent ropes—shaking our frail habitation and making us start—appeared to mark a climax in the argument. The Arabs kept up an incessant jabber all night—as it seemed to me. The voices, too, of Meeki and Hadji were constantly heard amidst the Babel. Every village, moreover, has its dogs without number: and these barked, howled, and flew about as if smitten with hydrophobia, or in full cry of a midnight chase. One imagined, too—or, worse than all, believed—that some of those wolfish and unclean animals were snuffling under the canvas close to the bed, or thumping against it, as if trying to get an entrance. And if this living creature rubbing against your thin wall was not a dog, might it not be an Arab?—and if an Arab might he not have a gun or dagger?—and then!

But all these experiences belonged to our novitiate. Very soon, between increased fatigue by day, and increased sleep by night, till it could increase no more without becoming apoplectic, all such thoughts and fears vanished, until dogs might bark, horses kick, Arabs talk, and camels groan, without disturbing us more than the waves disturb Ailsa Craig or Gibraltar.

V.

NEBY SAMWIL.

V.

NEBY SAMWIL.

I HAVE already stated that there are two great thoroughfares from Jaffa to Jerusalem—the one by Ramleh, and the other by the Beth-horons and Gibeon—and that we chose the latter. We did so that we might traverse the scene of Joshua's great battle with the "five kings," and also obtain our first general view of Palestine, including Jerusalem, from Neby Samwil.

But before bringing the reader to this famous spot, and picturing to him as best we can, what we saw from it, we must begin, like most gossips, at the beginning, which in this case is our early start from the tent, when there is a scene common to all mornings in a Palestine tour.

The tents and baggage precede the travellers, as

I have already said, in order that everything may be ready on their arrival at the end of the day's journey, which implies the tents pitched, the luggage arranged, the candles lighted, and the dinner ready. "Where shall we encamp?" is therefore the first question for the day which must be discussed with the dragoman. It is one not always easy of solution; for various matters must be taken into account—such as the distance to be travelled, the probability of pitching among civil neighbours, or of finding a Sheik who may be known to the dragoman; the supply of water, good shelter, and the chance of procuring provisions. The camping-ground being settled, preparations are made for the start. It is obviously most conducive to comfort to "break the back of the day" in the cool of the morning and before noon. It is therefore in vain that a lazy or sleepy man wishes to enjoy "a little more sleep and a little more slumber;" in vain may he, in the weakness of the flesh and for the credit of his conscience, assert, half asleep, half awake, that he had a restless night, for his companions testify to a continued snore from him like the burst of waves on a stony beach. Of course their testimony he indignantly rejects as incompetent. Still he *must* rise! At such moments—I write feelingly—the most sacred memories of holy places, the most eager desire to acquire knowledge, the poetry of Palestine travel, "Robinson," "Stanley,"

and "Eothen," lose their power to rouse. The whole being seems concentrated into a jelly, like the blood of St. Januarius. But in the mean time the pins of the tent are being pulled up. The ropes slacken, the tent-pole quivers, and to your horror you discover that your canvas dwelling is being taken down, and that in a few minutes, unless you start up and get dressed, you will be exposed in bed in open daylight, to the gaze of a crowd of grinning Arabs with piercing eyes and white teeth, who are watching for you as the tag-rag of a town for the removal of the canvas which conceals the wild beasts at a show. Move you must, therefore move you do. Very soon thereafter the beds are rolled up, the baggage packed, and everything stowed away on horse or mule's back, except the breakfast-table and camp stools around it, where the moveable feast is served up. But that packing! It was always a study to us, and never failed to excite remark and laughter. On such an occasion Meeki, the master of the horse, came out in the full strength of his power and passion. He reigned triumphant. His spirit seemed to inspire all the muleteers and the Arabs who assisted him, so that a common hysterical vehemence seized the whole group. They shouted, screeched, yelled, without a moment's pause. All seemed to be in a towering passion at every person and everything, and to be hoarse with rage and guttural vociferation. Every

parcel was strapped with a force and rapidity as if life depended on it. The heavy packages were lifted with starting eyeballs and foaming lips on to the backs of the mules. One heard ever and anon a despairing cry as if from a throat clutched by a garotter, "Had—ji A—li!" which after a while drew forth the chief with a calm and placid smile to decide the question in dispute. As the dread turmoil drew to a conclusion, the cook, the packing of whose utensils our breakfast necessarily retarded, became the great object of attention, and "Mo—ham—med!" was syllabled with intense vehemence by the impetuous Meeki or one of his aids, whose pride and dignity prompted a careful imitation of the master. At last the long line of our baggage animals moved, with trunks of crockery, rolls of bedding, and piles of portmanteaus and bags. Off the loaded animals went at a trot, with the bells tinkling round their necks, the muleteers following on foot, and driving them along the rough path at a far more rapid pace than we could follow. Meeki then took off his turban, dried his head, lighted his nargile, sat sideways on his dot of an ass, and brought up the rear of our cavalcade with a calmness and peace which had no traces of even the heavy swell that generally follows a hurricane by sea or land. Foaming and raging seemed to be the stereotyped way of doing business here, just as it is sometimes with preachers, who appear to think that

vehemence, even in commonplace, is necessary as a guarantee of earnestness.

One or two other characteristics of every spring morning in Palestine may be here mentioned. Nothing can exceed the buoyant, exhilarating atmosphere. The dews of night, which are so heavy that any garments left out become saturated with moisture as if soaked in a tub of water, seem to invigorate the air as well as the vegetation. There is consequently a youth, life, and fragrance in these mornings which cannot be surpassed even in the higher valleys of Switzerland, where the air is such that one can breathe it as a positive luxury. It is at these times, when the grass is heavy with dew, and the flowers give out their odour, and the air is cool and clear as crystal, and the body is refreshed with sleep—and, let us add, with breakfast—and the mind is on the *qui vive* for sights, and the memory full of the past, and our horse up to the mark, and the path tolerable, and the whole party well, hearty, and agreeable—it is at these times that one most rejoices in existence, feels it to be all "May from crown to heel," and blesses Providence for the great mercy of being in the Holy Land. As the day advances, and the sun begins to pour down his heat, and the body becomes weak, the tents somehow appear to be too far off.

The cavalcade generally rides along in single file.

There is seldom a path, or a bit of meadow, which permits of two jogging on together. But there is, after all, no great disadvantage in this limitation of riding space or of social conference, as there is no country in which silent thought and observation during a journey are more congenial than in Palestine.

The deliberate choosing of a Scripture scene for a place for luncheon, at first sounded as if it were an irreverence. Hadji rides up and inquires—"Where shall we *lonch*, Hakeem Pasha?" adding with a humble smile: "Where *you* please! All same to me." Where shall it be? At Bethlehem? Bethel? Shiloh? Nain? is discussed by the party. At first thought, it seems out of place to propose such a carnal thing as lunching on hard eggs and cold lamb at such places. Yet at these places one lunches or dines, as the Patriarchs did before.

The path by which we ascended the Judæan hills from the plain to the ridge at Gibeon is not, I believe, so rugged as the other leading from Jaffa to Jerusalem by Ramleh, but it is nevertheless one of the worst traversed by us in Palestine. With few exceptions, indeed—as when crossing a plain, or some rare bit of tolerably level country—the so-called roads are as rough as the bridle-paths across the Swiss or Highland hills. They are either covered with loose stones, which act as hollows for the horses' feet, or are worn down, by the travelling over

them since the days of the Canaanites, into narrow trenches cut deep into the living rock; or they go across slippery limestone ledges; or over a series of big stones with deep holes between; or are the channels of streams, which have the one advantage of being supplied with water to cool the hoofs of the floundering quadrupeds. But the horses are remarkably sure-footed, and the only danger arises from their riders checking them with the bridle, rather than letting them take their own way, and step with judicious thoughtfulness, as it often seemed to us, from stone to stone, picking their way with marvellous sagacity. Their pace is very slow. Not but that a rider with a "noble Arab steed" can manage to dash along and make "the stony pebbles fly" behind him; but this requires a good horse familiar with the ground, and a good rider as thoroughly acquainted with his horse. Ordinary mortals who like safety, not to speak of ease, take it quietly at the rate of three or four miles an hour. The length of the day's journey varies; but it is seldom under seven, and hardly ever above ten hours, including the time consumed at rest in the heat of the day (which is generally more than an hour), and in examining objects of interest *en route.*

We paced slowly upwards over polished limestone or marble rocks, in some places actually up artificial steps. One hour from Jimsû brought us to the lower Beth-horon,

now called Beitur El Talita; another hour to the upper Beth-horon, or Beitur El Foca.* In two hours more we reached the upland plateau, and after crossing the ridge saw Gibeon (El Jib) before us. Passing it on its eastern side, near which our tents were pitched, we ascended Neby Samwil.

I shall return to some features of the ascent, and the story of this famous road, but must in the mean time ask the reader to accompany me, with open eyes and heart, not forgetting fancy, to the height which we have reached in our journey Eastward.

There is not, I venture to affirm, in all Palestine, nor, if historical associations be taken into account, in the whole world, such a view as that seen from Neby Samwil. This is not because of its height (2650 feet)—though it is the highest point in Palestine, Hebron excepted—but from its position in relation to surrounding objects. This makes it a sort of centre, commanding such views of the most illustrious spots on earth as no other place affords.

It was from this summit—so at least it is said—that Richard Cœur de Lion first beheld Jerusalem, and exclaimed, as he covered his face: "Ah, Lord God, I pray that I may never see thy Holy City, if so be that I may

* The view from the roof of the Sheik's house at the upper Beth-horon should be seen by every traveller.

not rescue it from the hands of thine enemies." From hence also the great mediæval poet Juda Halevi is supposed to have first beheld the sacred city, and to have had those glowing memories and passionate sorrows awakened which he has embodied in a poem yet famous among his people, and which pours forth a wailing lament that finds an echo in the heart of all the outcast children of Israel. I know it only through a German translation read to me nearly twenty years ago by my very learned friend Dr. Biesenthal, of Berlin, himself of the seed of Abraham. The sentiment in one of the verses has clung to me. The poet, as he gazes at Jerusalem, cries out of a depth of sorrow which is past feeling and turns the heart into stone. He wishes to feel and consciously to realise the misery which the spectacle of his "mother, dear Jerusalem," and the triumph of the heathen over her, ought to inspire. And so he sings to this effect:—

> O. God! my cup of sorrow is too full!
> I cannot feel the grief I wish to feel.
> Take from it one drop—another—yet another—
> Then shall I drink it to the very dregs!

I mention these associations, for they were those that came to me at the time, with many others, like tumultuous waves from the past, mingled too with much that was painfully trivial:—the common effect of that strange reaction from the tension of the mind, experi-

enced on such occasions as the present, when approaching a moment in life that is to divide for ever what has been longed for from what is to be realised, and become henceforward only a memory. We have all experienced at such times the choking at the heart, the suppressed emotion, as the dream of years is about to become a reality. In a few minutes, when that height is gained, we shall have seen Jerusalem! So I felt, but in a less degree, when approaching Niagara, and when I was led blindfolded to the edge of the Table-rock, in order that the whole glory of the ocean of water pouring into the seething abyss might at once be revealed. But what was any scene on earth in comparison with the one which we were about to gaze on!

The summit was reached in solemn silence. There was no need of a guide to tell us what to look at first. Every face was turned towards Jerusalem. The eye and heart caught it at once, as they would a parent's bier in the empty chamber of death. The round hill dotted with trees, the dome beneath, the few minarets near it,—there were Olivet and Jerusalem! No words were spoken, no exclamations heard; nor are any explanations needed to enable the reader to understand our feelings when seeing, for the first time, the city of the Great King.

After a time we began with suppressed eagerness to

search out other objects in the landscape, and the curiosity became intense to identify its several features; and then we heard words breathed quietly into our ears, as an arm was stretched out directing us to several famous spots whose names were holy, and which summoned up the most illustrious persons and events in the memory of the Christian. But I must patiently consider the panorama more in detail, that we may learn something from it, for we cannot stand on any spot in Palestine from which we can see or learn more.

After Jerusalem, the first object that arrested me was the range of the hills of Moab. There are many places in Palestine that, when first seen, are to us as old friends. Previous reading, and illustrations, have made them familiar. But though I was in some degree prepared to recognise the range of Moab as a remarkable feature in the landscape, and as *telling* on the scenery of "the land"—yet somehow the reality far surpassed my expectation. These mountains reared themselves like a straight unbroken wall, not one peak or point breaking the even line along the eastern sky from north to south. They were not higher above the level of the sea than the place on which we stood; yet they seemed to form a gigantic barrier between us and the almost unknown country beyond, and their effect on the character of the landscape was decided. They were a frame, or setting,

to it, giving it a dignity, elevation, strength, and majesty, without which it would have been flat, tame, and comparatively uninteresting. No doubt we saw the range in the most advantageous circumstances. It was towards evening. The setting sun fell upon it, and upon the wild eastern shores of the Dead Sea at its base, the sea itself being hidden in its deep hollow grave. The light was reflected from every scaur and precipice, with such a flush of purple, mingled with delicate hues of amethyst and ruby, as produced a glory not exaggerated in Holman Hunt's picture of "The Scapegoat." The atmosphere, too, was so transparent, that we distinctly saw beyond the Dead Sea what appeared to us a white building, situated on a point, in a straight line, over or near Jerusalem. Was this Kerak? There are no other human habitations in that direction.

The next thing that impressed me, standing here, was the smallness of the land. We saw across it. On one side was the great sea, on which sails were visible; on the other, the range of Moab, which is beyond the eastern boundary of Palestine. To the south we saw within a few miles of Hebron; while to the north we discovered the steep promontory of Carmel plunging its beak into the sea. It is difficult to conceive that the Palestine of the Patriarchs—that is, the country from the inhabited "south" to the great plain of Esdraelon,

which, like a green strait, sweeps past Carmel to the steeps above the Jordan, and separates the old historical land of Canaan from Galilee—does not extend further than the distance between Glasgow and Perth, and could be traversed by an express train in two or three hours. But so it is. The whole land, even from Dan to Beersheba, is not larger than Wales. We saw not only the entire breadth but almost the entire length of the Palestine of the Patriarchs from the height of Neby Samwil.

To some extent the general structure of the country was also visible. We had to the west the dead flat Philistine plain skirting the Mediterranean, and spreading itself about ten miles inland, where, like a sea, it formed green bays at the foot of the Judæan hills. We are standing on one of the rugged sides of that central mountain ridge of Palestine, which, like a capsized flat-bottomed boat of corrugated iron, lay between the sea and the Jordan; and are looking down from the keel of this boat, a few hundred feet above the undulating, rough table-land with its small hills, which, to carry out the rude simile, are stuck, like huge limpets, over the boat's bottom. The other side of the gunwale rolls over out of sight, and rests on the plain of the Jordan, which rushes along its outer edge, while the wall of Moab rises beyond. One end of this same capsized boat descends to the plain of Esdraelon, the other to

the desert beyond Hebron. Its corrugated sides are the Wadies that cut deep towards the Philistine plain on the west, and the plain of the Jordan on the east.

And how did the land look? Was it picturesque? Had it that romantic beauty of hill and dale, that look of a second Paradise, which one has sometimes heard in descriptions of it from the pulpit? Well, it did not give me this impression. But what then? What if it is not to be compared with a thousand spots in our own island —which by the way includes within its rocky shores more scenes of varied beauty than any other portion of the earth;—what if Westmoreland and Wales, not to speak of the Scotch Highlands, contain landscapes far more lovely than are to be found in Palestine? Still Palestine stands alone;—alone in its boundaries of seas and sandy deserts and snow-clad mountains; and alone in the variety of its soil, climate, and productions. I do not claim for it either beauty or grandeur—which may be found in almost every region of the globe—but I claim for it peculiarities and contrasts to which no other region can afford a parallel. Grant its present poor condition, its streams dried up, its tillage neglected, its statuesque scenery unsubdued by the mellowed and softening influences of a moist atmosphere, its roads rough, its hills bare, and its limestone rocks unprotected by soil, its villages wretched hovels, its towns extinct, its pea-

santry slaves or robbers—what then? Is there no poetry in this desolation which, if it does not represent the past, is yet the picture which flashed before the spiritual eye of the mourning prophets? Is there no poetry, either, in the harmony between the rocky sternness of the land and the men of moral thews and sinews which it produced; or in the contrast between its nothingness as a land of physical greatness and glory, and the greatness and glory of the persons and events which were cradled in its little Wadies and on its small rocky eminences? Is there no poetry, nothing affecting to the imagination, in the physical structure of a country which is without a parallel on earth? For within a space so small that the eye can take it in from more than one point, there are heights, like Hermon, covered with eternal snow, and depths, like the Jordan valley, with a heat exceeding that of the tropics; there is on one side the sea, and on the other a lake whose surface is 1300 feet lower down, with soundings as deep again. Where is there such a river as the Jordan, whose turbulent waters never gladdened a human habitation, nor ever irrigated a green field,—which pursues its continuous course for 200 miles within a space easily visible, and ends at last in the sea of death never to reappear? Where on earth is there such a variety of vegetation, from the palm on the sultry plain to the lichen beside the glacier?—where such howling

wildernesses, such dreary and utterly desolate wastes, with such luxuriant plains, fertile valleys, pasture lands, vineyards, and corn-fields?—where such a climate varying through every degree of temperature and of moisture?

Of a truth the beautiful is not necessarily associated with what stirs the human mind to wonder and admiration. Who thinks of the beautiful when visiting a churchyard, where the great and good lie interred; or a battle-field, where courage and self-sacrifice have won the liberties of the world; or a spot like the bare rough rock of the Areopagus, on which stood the lowly, unknown, despised Jew revealing truths to Athens such as Plato the spiritual and Socrates the God-fearing had never discovered? Or who thinks of the beautiful in thinking about Paul himself, "whose bodily presence was weak," although he was the greatest man, as a teacher, that ever lived?

Not for one moment then did I feel disappointed with Palestine. It was the greatest poem I ever read, full of tragic grandeur and sweetest hymns. I did not look for beauty, and therefore was not surprised at its absence; but I did look for the battle scenes—for the Marathon and Thermopylæ—of the world's civilisation, and for the earthly stage on which real men of flesh and blood, but full of the spirit of the living God, played out their

grand parts, and sung their immortal songs, which have revolutionised the world, and I found it no other than I looked for, to my ceaseless joy and thanksgiving.

But let us once more attend to the details of the landscape.

Look with me towards the west. Our backs are consequently to the hills of Moab, and our faces towards the "great sea," which stretches as an immense blue plain, ending in the horizon, or rather in a drapery of luminous cloud no one can exactly say where. The shore you see is a straight line running north and south; and we can distinguish at this distance of, say twenty miles, the long sandy downs that separate the blue sea from the green sea of plain. Look southward along the shore—that protruding point of the Judæan hills conceals Askelon from us; that confused-looking mound on the plain marks the site of Ashdod; another smaller Tell, scarcely visible, a little to the left of Ramleh, is Ekron. We are already acquainted with Ramleh and Lydda, so distinctly seen beneath us on the plain. Beyond them is Jaffa, our old friend, like a grey turban on its hill. Now, carrying the eye along the sea from Jaffa northward, you perceive, over the low spurs of the hills which conceal the rest of the sea-shore, that headland—it is Carmel!

This view gives us an excellent idea of the relationship

between the uplands of Judæa, on which we stand, and the alluvial plain of Philistia and Sharon, whose rich soil, pastures, and corn-fields, with its harbours, its access to the sea, and its adaptedness to war chariots, account to us for the numbers and power of its bold and unscrupulous inhabitants.

Now let us turn in the opposite direction, from the sea to the west, with the range of Moab along the sky-line opposite to us, and the table-land of Judæa, a few miles broad, at our feet. Looking to the right, southward, we see the undulating hills around and beyond Bethlehem, which is itself unseen, being nestled lower down. That marked summit rising beyond Bethlehem, like a mound between us and the golden hills of Moab, is Jebel Fureidís, where Herod lies buried; nearer, but in the same direction, and about six miles off, are Jerusalem and Olivet; right under us, the eye slowly passing northward, we see the conical hill of Jabel Ful, or Gibeah of Saul; onwards to the north, on our left is the country round Bethel, with El-ram, Geba, and Micmash: while further beyond, the mountains of Ephraim cluster on the horizon, and shut in our view. Beside us is Gibeon, and the scene of the great battle of Beth-horon, which completes our circle and carries us back to the point from which we started.

The slightest idea of this panorama, the faintest im-

pression which words (assisted by the map) can convey, will suggest to the reader what we realised in gazing upon it—that, on the whole, it is the most interesting view in the world.

But we are not yet done with Neby Samwil, if our readers will have patience and tolerate us and our geography a little longer. The hill is a great teacher—a comment on Scripture—a light to its sacred pages—a photographer of its stories. For the history of Palestine cannot be separated from its geography. What a confused idea of the history of Great Britain, for instance, would a man have, if to him Edinburgh was at Land's End, and London near Aberdeen; the Highland hills in Hampshire, or the midland counties in Skye or Caithness? What would be the history of modern Europe to him, if his Waterloo was in the Danubian Provinces and Moscow at Inverness? Yet such an arrangement of places is not more incongruous than are the ideas of many tolerably intelligent people whom I have met, with regard to the geography of Palestine.

Now we see with our own eyes, from Neby Samwil, the scenes, as I have said, of several Scripture narratives.

As we look down on the maritime plain, we see Azotus (Ashdod), where Philip was found, and follow his track along the sea-shore as he passed northward to

Cæsarea.* In Ashdod and Ekron, both visible, abode the ark of God for seven months. We see Lydda, where Peter healed Eneas; Joppa, from which they sent for him when Dorcas died, and from which he afterwards journeyed to meet Cornelius, also at Cæsarea.† Here we trace for the first time the footsteps of St. Paul, for down this path by the Beth-horons he probably descended twice from Jerusalem to Cæsarea—in both cases to save his life.‡

Standing here, we understand also the great battle which Joshua waged against the petty, yet, in their own

* "But Philip was found at Azotus: and passing through he preached in all the cities, till he came to Cæsarea."—Acts viii. 40.

† "And it came to pass, as Peter passed throughout all quarters, he came down also to the saints which dwelt at Lydda. ... And all that dwelt at Lydda and Saron saw him, and turned to the Lord. ... And forasmuch as Lydda was nigh to Joppa, and the disciples had heard that Peter was there, they sent unto him two men, desiring him that he would not delay to come to them."—Acts ix. 32, 35, 38.

‡ "And he spake boldly in the name of the Lord Jesus, and disputed against the Grecians: but they went about to slay him. Which when the brethren knew, they brought him down to Cæsarea, and sent him forth to Tarsus."—Acts ix. 29, 30.

"And when it was day, certain of the Jews banded together, and bound themselves under a curse, saying that they would neither eat nor drink till they had killed Paul. .... And he called unto him two centurions, saying, Make ready two hundred soldiers to go to Cæsarea, and horsemen threescore and ten, and spearmen two hundred, at the third hour of the night. .... And provide them beasts, that they may set Paul on, and bring him safe unto Felix the governor."—Acts xxiii. 12, 23, 24.

place, and amongst their own numerous tribes, powerful chiefs of the heathen people of the land. For at our feet is the hill on which the village of El-Jib is now built, but which, as I have said, represents the old city of Gibeon, the capital of a numerous though not very valiant clan, and which commanded this great pass from the plain to the Jordan. From this spot went those cunning diplomatists, the Gibeonites, to deceive Joshua, their want of truth all the while arising from a practical faith in Joshua as a great general and a veritable conqueror of the land. And out of those as yet to us unseen depths which plunge from the table-land of Judæa towards the Jordan, Joshua and his host made that wonderful march by night up 3000 feet and for about twenty miles, until he reached Gibeon, his army in the morning rising like the sudden flood of a stormy sea, column after column pouring over the ridge into the upland plain round El-Jib, on which the heathen host were encamped, then dashing among them, and sweeping them over the western ridge down the wild steeps that lead to the Philistian plain. The battle-field explained the battle. The rout must have been terrible! I have visited many battle-fields, but except those where Suwarrow fought in the High Alps, or those in the Pyrenees where Wellington defeated Soult, I never saw any so wild as this. From the dip of the strata, rocks

clothe the sides of the hills like the scales of a huge monster, overlapping each other, yet leaving deep interstices between. Steep gorges and narrow valleys cleave the hills as with deep gashes on every side of the road. After riding up the ascent to the plain of Gibeon, we understood how a demoralised army would in flight become utterly powerless, and, if panic-stricken, be hurled over each succeeding range of rocks.*

Down beneath us was a green bay running from Philistia into the bosom of the hills. It was Ajalon! The Arabs call it *Yalo.*

But it is time to withdraw our gaze from the distant landscape, and our thoughts from what it suggests, and come back once more to Neby Samwil. The spot itself calls up many memories of the past. Here, probably, was the famous "High Place" of Gibeon, where the tabernacle constructed by Moses, and which had been the moveable temple throughout the wilderness journey, was pitched after many wanderings, and stood until Solomon's Temple was built at Jerusalem.† Here public worship

* See Appendix No. IV.

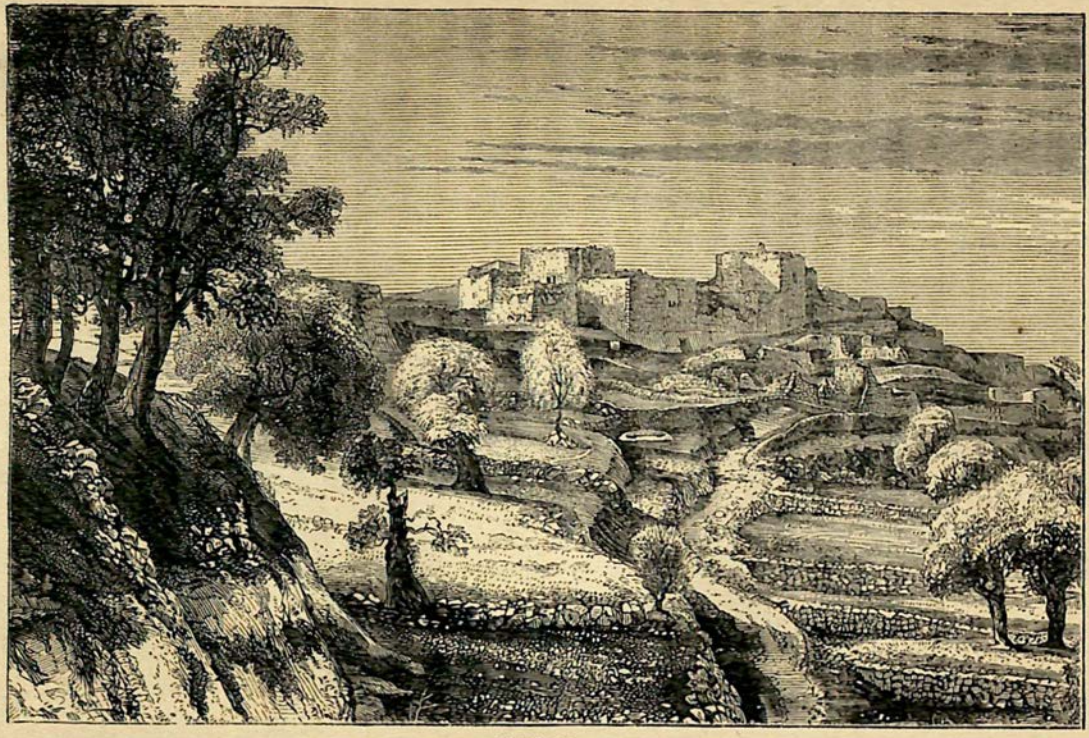
† It is, I think, extremely unlikely that the lower hill of Gibeon, on the northern portion of which El-Jib is built, and which is almost concealed in an upland flat fenced off by an encircling ridge, should, as some suppose, have been the high place of Gibeon, instead of Neby Samwil, which stands up like a high altar, visible from the surrounding country. I agree with Dr. Stanley in believing that neither was Mizpeh the high place. The

was conducted, by a staff of priests appointed by David, around the brazen altar of Moses;—for "he left there before the ark of the covenant of the Lord Asaph and his brethren, to minister before the ark continually, as every day's work required; and Obed-edom with their brethren, threescore and eight; Obed-edom also the son of Jeduthun and Hosar to be porters; and Zadok the priest, and his brethren the priests, before the tabernacle of the Lord in the high place that was at Gibeon, to offer burnt-offerings unto the Lord upon the altar of the burnt-offering continually morning and evening, and to do according to all that is written in the law of the Lord, which he commanded Israel; and with them Heman and Jeduthun, and the rest that were chosen, who were expressed by name, to give thanks to the Lord, because his mercy endureth for ever; and with them Heman and Jeduthun with trumpets and cymbals for those that should make a sound, and with musical instruments of God. And the sons of Jeduthun were porters. And all the people departed every man to his house: and David returned to bless his house." It was the scene, too, of one of the most imposing pageants

mere fact of the stones of Ramah having been brought to Mizpeh makes it, to say the least of it, extremely improbable that they were carried to this high place. Scopus meets the whole requirements of the case.

ever witnessed in Judæa, when Solomon, with all that show, splendour, and magnificence which are associated with his name, "went to Gibeon to sacrifice there; for that was the great high place; a thousand burnt offerings did Solomon offer upon that altar." (1 Kings iii. 4.) Here, too, in Gibeon, the Lord appeared to Solomon in a dream, by night, and God said unto him, "Ask what I shall give thee." (2 Chron. i. 7.) And he asked wisdom, and got it.

I left the top of Neby Samwil with devoutest thanksgiving, feeling that, if I saw no more, but were obliged to return next day to Europe, my journey would have been well repaid. As the sun set, we descended the steep and rugged hill to our tents. We fully enjoyed the comfort and repose which they afforded. Nubi was busy with the dinner; Meeki was enjoying his nargile; while, all around, were kneeling camels, belonging to some travelling Arabs, chewing their evening meal of chopped straw, in which the horses and mules of our cavalcade heartily joined them. "With one stride came the dark" —yet a dark illumined by those clear stars which we never grew weary of looking at in this glorious sky. By-and-by the chatter of the Arabs from Gibeon grew less, and the crowd dispersed. Even Meeki seemed to be dozing. The camel-drivers wrapped themselves in their cloaks, and lay curled up on the ground, like brown



GIBEON.

snails, beside their meeked-eyed beasts. The quadrupeds, too, after paying off a few private grievances with sundry kicks and sharp cries, sank into silence: at least I supposed they did so, for I, with my companions, soon fell into deep sleep on ground where Hivite and Perizzite had slept before me, and which had thundered to their tread as they rushed along before the storm of Joshua's fierce attack.

Next morning we visited Gibeon (El-Jib) and its immediate neighbourhood. The accompanying view of it from the plain to the west, will give an idea of its limestone ledges and general appearance.* The most remarkable thing about it belonging to the past is a spring in a large cave, to which worn steps, cut out of the rock, descend. Near this is a large pool, as large as that of Hebron, but dried up. It was most probably the scene of the battle *à l'outrance* between the men of Judah and Benjamin.†

* The illustration of Gibeon is copied from a photograph by Mr. Francis Bedford, taken during the tour of H.R.H. the Prince of Wales, and published by Messrs. Day and Son. I have pleasure in directing attention to this magnificent series of photographic views.

† "And Abner the son of Ner, and the servants of Ish-bosheth the son of Saul, went out from Mahanaim to Gibeon. And Joab the son of Zeruiah, and the servants of David, went out, and met together by the pool of Gibeon: and they sat down, the one on the one side of the pool, and the other on the other side of the pool. And Abner said to Joab, Let the young men now arise, and play

Here, too, Johannan fought the traitor Ishmael.*

As we descended from Gibeon, we saw the top of the hill of Gibeah of Saul, rising over the low eastern ridge. If the sons of the miserable, broken-hearted, but loving mother Rizpah, were hung up for months on the top of Gibeah, they could be seen from Gibeon by those who had demanded their cruel execution—a horrid sight between them and the eastern sky!

When but a few minutes on our journey, and as we passed round the plain by the road which leads to Jerusalem, we were attracted by a huge stone lying horizontally among others in a low rocky ridge close to the

before us. And Joab said, Let them arise. Then there arose and went over by number twelve of Benjamin, which pertained to Ish-bosheth the son of Saul, and twelve of the servants of David. And they caught every one his fellow by the head, and thrust his sword in his fellow's side; so they fell down together: wherefore that place was called Helkath-hazzurim, which is in Gibeon. And there was a very sore battle that day; and Abner was beaten, and the men of Israel, before the servants of David."—2 Sam. ii. 12-17.

* "But when Johanan the son of Kareah, and all the captains of the forces that were with him, heard of all the evil that Ishmael the son of Nethaniah had done, then they took all the men, and went to fight with Ishmael the son of Nethaniah, and found him by the great waters that are in Gibeon. Now it came to pass, that when all the people which were with Ishmael saw Johanan the son of Kareah, and all the captains of the forces that were with him, then they were glad. So all the people that Ishmael had carried away captive from Mizpah cast about and returned, and went unto Johanan the son of Kareah. But Ishmael the son of Nethaniah escaped from Johanan with eight men, and went to the Ammonites."—Jerem. xli. 11-15.

path on the left. Was this the "great stone of Gibeon?"* We could not decide whether it was *in situ* or placed there by the hands of man—or, even if it was *in situ*, whether it was *the* stone. There ever and anon occur in Bible history notices of great stones, rocks, caves, wells, &c.—permanent objects in nature—which, if travellers had only time and patience to examine, would be to a large extent discoverable.

We descended to the table-land of Judah before noon, and entered upon a broad, rough, stony path—the great northern road from Jerusalem to Galilee. We knew now that we were, for the first time, on the highway along which priests and kings, prophets and apostles, the holy men of old, and the One above all, had passed to and fro. We slowly came nearer Jerusalem. We passed over a grey ridge, like a roll of a sea wave, and saw the Damascus Gate before us. We turned down to the left, towards the north-east corner of the wall, and got among

* "When they were at the great stone which is in Gibeon, Amasa went before them. And Joab's garment that he had put on was girded unto him, and upon it a girdle with a sword fastened upon his loins in the sheath thereof; and as he went forth it fell out. And Joab said to Amasa, Art thou in health, my brother? And Joab took Amasa by the beard with the right hand to kiss him. But Amasa took no heed to the sword that was in Joab's hand: so he smote him therewith in the fifth rib, and shed out his bowels to the ground, and struck him not again; and he died. So Joab and Abishai his brother pursued after Sheba the son of Bichri."—2 Sam. xx. 8-10.

Mohametan tombs, which for some reason or other were being visited by a number of women draped and veiled in white. We descended a hundred yards or so until we reached the road that passes from Anathoth to the city; travelled along it, with the Kedron valley to our left, and Olivet rising beyond,—the city wall crowning the slope to our right,—and then rode up to St. Stephen's Gate, entered it, took off our hats as we passed the portal, but spoke not a word, for we had entered Jerusalem!

VI.

ENTRANCE INTO JERUSALEM.

VI.

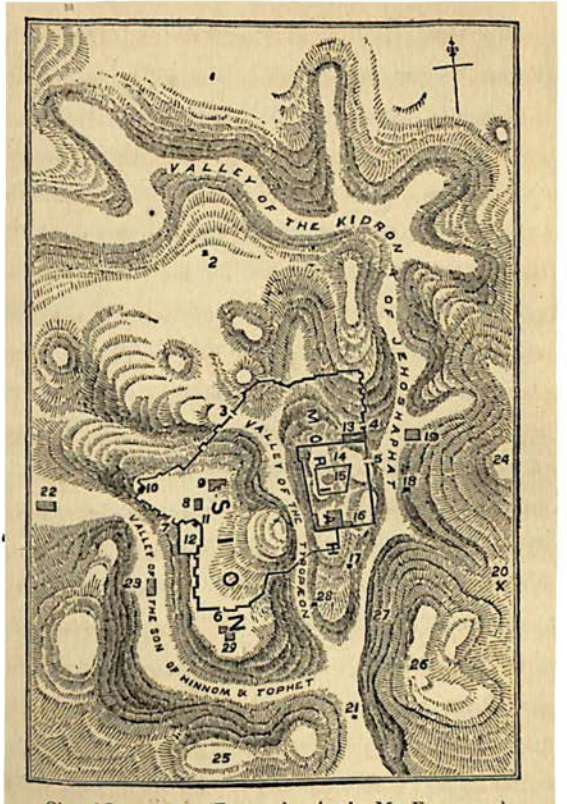
ENTRANCE INTO JERUSALEM.

"YOU will be devoting a Chapter to Jerusalem of course," remarked a grave and kind friend to whom I had been showing some of my earlier chapters: "I need not say," he continued, "that you will write very seriously then, and have no more jokes." "It is not my habit," was my reply, "to arrange beforehand when I shall laugh or weep; or at what point in my journey I shall smile or sigh: these emotions must come and go as the soul listeth." "No doubt, no doubt," my friend said; "but ——" and he paused as if in difficulty. "But what?" I inquired. "At Jerusalem," he said, "you know, one must be cautious. It is a peculiar place—very. Excuse me, but I thought I would take the liberty of giving you the

hint. Not that *I* care; but there are people, you know—people who have odd notions—people who—who——" "I understand," I said. "I am glad you do," he continued, as if somewhat relieved; "for there are people who—who—yes, good people, and sensible people too—who do not understand a clergyman if he——but I see you understand what I would be at, and I need say no more." Then turning round, he added, "*I* don't myself object to a joke at all, even in Palestine; but there are people who—you understand? Good-bye!"

Yes, I quite understood my friend, as well as the good people whom he described with so much clearness.

I remember a lady, whose mind was engrossed with the question of the return of the Jews to Palestine, being dreadfully shocked by a religious and highly respectable man, who presumed to express the opinion in her hearing, that the time was not far distant when there might be a railway from Jaffa to Jerusalem, and the cry be heard from an English voice of, "Bethlehem Station!" The fair friend of Israel thereupon drew herself up indignantly and exclaimed, "Pray, sir, don't be profane!" The unfortunate friend of progress went home that night under the impression that, unknown to himself, he had hitherto been an infidel. Now who could joke about anything in Palestine with such a fair one as this for his reader?



Site of Jerusalem. (From a drawing by Mr. Fergusson.)
Scale, 1084 yards to the inch.

1. Scopus.
2. Tombs of the Kings.
3. Damascus Gate.
4. St. Stephen's Gate.
5. Golden Gate
6. David's Gate.
7. Jaffa Gate.
8. Pool of Hezekiah.
9. The Holy Sepulchre.
10. Jalûd Ruin.
11. Castle of David.
12. Citadel.
13. Pool of Bethesda.
14. The Haram, or Holy Place, containing—
15. The Dome of the Rock, and
16. The Mosques El-Aksa and Omar.
17. Fountain of the Virgin.
18. Pillar of Absalom.
19. Gethsemane.
20. *Shoulder of the Mount of Olives, where "He beheld the city, and wept over it."
21. Enrogel.
22. Upper Pool.
23. Lower Pool.
24. Summit of the Mount of Olives.
25. Hill of Evil Counsel.
26. Mt. of Corruption.
27. Village of Siloam.
28. Pool of Siloam.
29. Sepulchre of David.

Again, a relative of mine who visited Jerusalem a few years ago, met there a sea-captain and his wife. The vessel, a collier from Newcastle, which the former commanded, or possibly the latter, from her manifest influence over her husband, had taken refuge at Jaffa, and the captain had been induced by his lady to go up to Jerusalem to see the sights. My friend one day noticed a serious controversy going on, in low whispers, between the worthy pair, and accompanied by most dramatic looks and words, in which the wife seemed to be pleading some point with her husband, in whom signs of suppressed wonder, obstinacy, and anger were alternately manifested. Thinking they had got into some perplexity from which he might be able to relieve them, my friend meekly offered his services. "Thank you, sir, most kindly," said the lady. "But I am really provoked with the captain; for he is, I am ashamed to say, sir, quite an unbeliever." "Humbug, my dear!" interrupted the captain. "No humbug at all, sir," replied his mate, addressing my friend, "but wery expensive unbelief too, I do assure you; for what is the use, I'd like to know, of one's paying a guide for showing you all them famous places if one does not, like the captain, believe what the guide says?" "Easy, my dear," protested the honest sailor, laying his hand quietly on his wife's arm; "I knows and believes as well as you

do the Scripturs, and knows that all them places are in the Bible; but don't let any of them guides come it over me so strong with their lies, and tell me that that hill is the Mount of Holives, and that other place the Holy Sepulchre, and Calvary, and all that sort of thing. I came here to please *you*, Anne Jane, but not to have all them things crammed down my throat; so belay. I'll pay for *your* sake, but I won't believe them Jews: I knows them far too well; you don't!" Whether the captain was ever able to square the actual Jerusalem with his ideal one, I know not.

Now these stories, literally true, only illustrate in a ludicrous form the fact, that many people have, like the captain, a Jerusalem of their own—full of the beautiful, the sacred, the holy, and the good—but which is no more like the real Jerusalem than is the "New Jerusalem." Hence, when they visit Jerusalem, they are terribly disappointed; or when any traveller who has done so describes it as he would any other city, and admits that he has felt some of the lighter and more ordinary emotions of humanity in it, it looks to them almost like profanity, or what some people call, with equal wisdom, "irreverence."

But, after all, there needs no effort to "get up" feeling in Jerusalem. It has no doubt its commonplace, prosaic features, more so indeed than most cities of

the Eastern world; but it has its glory, its waking-dreams, its power over the imagination and the whole spirit, such as no city on earth ever had, or can have. Therefore I shall tell what I saw and felt in Jerusalem, how sun and shade alternated there, how smile and tear came and went in it, just as I would when speaking of any other spot on this material earth.

Yet I entered Jerusalem with neither smile nor tear, but with something between the two; for I had no sooner doffed my tabousch in reverence as I passed through St. Stephen's Gate and experienced that queer feeling about the throat which makes one cough, and dims the eyes with old-fashioned tears, than my horse—very probably owing to my want of clear vision—began to slide and skate and stumble over the hard, round, polished stones which pave or spoil the road. I heard some of my companions saying, "Look at the Pool of Bethesda! See the green grass of the Temple Area! We are going to enter the Via Dolorosa!", but how could I take in the full meaning of the words, when with each announcement a fore-leg or a hind-leg of my horse went off in a slide or drew back with a shudder, and when the horrors of broken bones became so present as for a moment to exclude all other thoughts? "Such is life," as the saying is. And such were the prosaic circumstances of my entrance into Jerusalem. I tried,

however, to make them more harmonious with my body and mind, by descending from my horse, handing him to Meeki, wiping my brow, and begging my brother to repeat some of his information, while I sat on a portion of an old wall to listen.

Within a few yards of the Gate of St. Stephen, by which we entered, there was a large square space, into which we looked. It is a large tank, about 365 feet long, 30 broad, and 50 deep, with high enclosing walls, and is called the Pool of Bethesda. The bottom is earth and rubbish; but the ledge is sufficient, along its northern slope, to afford room for a half-naked Arab to plough it with a scraggy ass. Its porches and everything like ornament are gone, and nothing remains save the rough walls of this great bath. Some say it was the ditch of the fortress of Antonia; but we do not enter on such questions.

Turning the eyes to the left you see, about fifty yards off along the city wall, southward, a narrow gateway opening into the bright green grass, looking fresh and cool. That is one of the entrances into the Haram Area, or the wide, open space where once stood the Temple. But we dare not enter it at present, for it is holy ground, and we must get a letter from the Pasha, and pay him a good *backsheesh* to secularize the spot sufficiently to admit us. We shall pay for the privilege,

and visit it by-and-by. In the mean time let us walk to the hotel. Our path is along the so-called "Via Dolorosa." This is a narrow street, roughly paved, and hemmed in with ruined walls sadly wanting in mortar. In some parts there are arches overhead, and many delightful studies of old houses and ancient mason work, which, by the way, a young lady was sketching as we passed, seated on a camp stool, with a white umbrella over her head. How one's thoughts went home to the happy English fireside, with paterfamilias, and brothers and sisters, looking over her drawings!

One repeats to himself as he goes along this street, "The Via Dolorosa!"—words so full of meaning, but which the street does not help to interpret; unless from its being, as seen "in the light of common day," a tumble-down, poverty-stricken, back lane, without anything which the eye can catch in harmony with the past.

Was this the real "Via Dolorosa"? But we must not begin with our scepticism as to places, or encourage those "obstinate questionings" which constantly suggest themselves in Jerusalem. "The Church," no doubt, makes up for the silence of authentic history by supplying, out of her inexhaustible store of traditions, a guide to pilgrims, which enables them to see such holy spots as the following:—"The window in the 'Arch of Ecce Homo,' from which Pilate addressed the people,"

—"the place where Pilate declared his innocence,"—"where Jesus stood as He addressed him,"—"where Mary stood near Him as He spoke,"—the several places "where Jesus fell down under the weight of the

Via Dolorosa.

cross,"—the spot "where Simon had the cross laid upon him," &c., &c.* All Jerusalem is thus dotted by the Church with fictitious places, *in memoriam*, to excite

* All such places are carefully noted in the lithographed 'Album of Jerusalem' (from photography), published by Zoeller, Vienna.

the devotion of the faithful. To their eye of "faith" the Via Dolorosa is necessarily a very different street from what it can possibly be to us whose "faith" is not quite so firm in tradition.

After leaving the Via Dolorosa we passed through the bazaar, but it is poor, squalid, and unworthy of any particular notice, after those of Cairo, or even Alexandria. There was the usual narrow path between the little dens called shops, with the accustomed turbans presiding over the usual wares—shoes, seeds, pipes, clothes, tobacco, hardware, cutlery, &c., while crowds moved to and fro wearing every shade of coloured clothes, and composed of every kind of out-of-the-way people, Jews, Turks, Greeks, Bedowin, with horses, asses, camels, all in a state of excitement.

We then went to an hotel to call for a friend. How shall I describe these so-called hotels? I cannot indeed now separate in memory one hotel from the other—and there are but three in Jerusalem. They are, however, wonderfully confused and picturesque, with their rooms, corners, passages, outside storeys from floor to floor, giving endless peeps of open sky, with balconies and flat roofs, all huddled together like a number of hat-cases, or bandboxes, and approached, not as in other countries by an imposing door, over which hangs an enormous gilt sign of the Golden Bull, or Spread Eagle, or by an

open court, beyond which drays, gigs, and carriages are seen, but by a steep, narrow trap stair, which ascends from a door in the street, but which is more a slit in the wall than a door, and might conduct from a condemned cell to the gallows. This sort of architecture is very characteristic of a country where, at a moment's notice, or without it, the orthodox descendants of the Prophet might take it into their turbaned heads to gain heaven by attacking the hotel, under the influence of some fanatical furor. "There is no saying!" as the cautious and timid affirm when they expect some mysterious *doing*. And thus the steep stair rising from the narrow door, would serve as a mountain pass for the defenders of the hotel; while the more extended battle-field of the open spaces above, overlooked by upper storeys like overhanging precipices, would become strategic points of immense importance. The "travellers' room" in this hotel is not unlike what one finds in small country inns in Britain. The back windows are in a wall which forms one of the sides of the "Pool of Hezekiah"!—so-called. There the old reservoir lay, immediately beneath us, with its other sides formed by walls of houses, their small windows looking into it just as the one which I gazed through did. It was an odd association, when one withdrew his head and surveyed the room, to see placards on the wall advertising "Bass" and "Allsopp." No wonder

the captain was sceptical as to his being in the Holy City of his early associations!

My first desire on entering the hotel was to ascend to the uppermost roof to obtain a glimpse of the city. I was enabled to gratify my wishes, and to see over a confusion of flat and domed buildings, pleasantly relieved here and there by green grass and trees. The elegant "Dome of the Rock" rose over them all, while above and beyond it was the grey and green Mount of Olives, dotted with trees. To take in this view at first was impossible. One repeated to himself, as if to drive the fact into his brain, or as if addressing a person asleep or half idiotic, "That is the Mount of Olives! that is the Mount of Olives! Do you comprehend what I am saying?" "No, I don't," was the stupid reply; "I see that hill, and hear you repeat its name; but in the mean time I am asleep, and dreaming; yet, as I *know* that I am asleep, perhaps this half-intelligent consciousness hopefully prophesies a waking up."

Before going to our own "khan," we went to the post-office, for letters from home. It was an odd sort of cabin, and was reached by a flight of outside stairs rising from the street leading to the Jaffa Gate. Letters from home! Were you ever abroad, reader? If not, you cannot understand the pleasure of getting letters. It reminds us of the olden days when we left home for the

first time." One of the blessings of travel is the new world, or rather series of worlds, into which it introduces us,—worlds no doubt of human beings singularly like ourselves; but yet to whom our whole circle of ordinary thought, and the ten thousand things which we believe, do, suffer from, or hope for,—all are utterly unknown and uncared for, just as the troubles of the landlord of a Jerusalem hotel are unknown to the Sultan and disturb not his repose. But this feeling of being the inhabitant of another world only enhances the delight of receiving letters from our old world, detailing the characteristic sayings and doings of the circle, smaller or greater, round the warm centre of that blessed spot called our fire-side. It is singular how hazy many of our friends become in a few weeks. Old neighbours become myths, and local disputes faint echoes from a pre-existent state of being.

Letters read, and good news received by all, we went to our hotel, which from a small board a foot or so long, nailed over the narrow door, we discovered to be "The Damascus." Hadji Ali had procured for us three rooms on the first landing, which opened on a paved court whose roof was the glorious sky. The rooms were vaulted, clean, and comfortable, and not intolerably muggy. The beds had mosquito curtains, and the floors were flagged. The supply of water from a pump near our doors was unlimited. Our retainers had a space

allotted to themselves, where they squatted like gipsies, cooked for us in the open air, and lived very much as they would have done in the desert. Meeki and his muleteers were the only absentees, and where they lived I know not. Very probably it was in the stables with their horses and asses, whose sleep they would no doubt disturb. Hadji and his coadjutors, Nubi the waiter and Mohammed the cook, took the sole charge of us while in this domicile; so that I do not know whether there were any persons in the hotel in the capacity of host or waiters. There were among its inhabitants an English party, whose orthodoxy we can certify from their rising early, sometimes before the sun, to discharge their religious duties in the Church of the Holy Sepulchre. Among them was an intelligent, agreeable, and pious High Church clergyman. They were housed in places reached by outside stairs, somewhere among the highest roofs of the many-roofed building. On the evening of our arrival, I climbed over their apartments, ascending to the highest point by a ladder, and from thence I again saw Olivet, just as the last rays of the sun were colouring it with a golden hue, and making the Dome of the Rock sparkle with touches of brilliant light. And from the same spot I saw it immediately before sunrise next morning, when the silence of the city, and the freshness of the air, and the shadows cast from the hill, gave it a quite different,

but equally fascinating aspect. And thus slowly, but very surely, I began to *feel* that this was indeed the real Mount of Olives!

Never did I retire to rest with deeper thanksgiving than on my first night in Jerusalem. Ever and anon as the mind woke up, while the body gradually sank into repose, the thought, "I am in Jerusalem!" more and more inspired me with a grateful sense of God's goodness and mercy in having enabled me to enter it.

Before saying anything of next day's visits, I must declare that I abjure all discussions, with a few exceptions afterwards to be noticed, as to the antiquities of Jerusalem; and shall give no opinion on any of its old walls, first, second, or third, or upon the value of this or that closed-up archway or crumbling ruin. Like most travellers I had "crammed" to some extent before leaving home, and brought a box of books with me, and sundry articles and pamphlets to "study" on the spot. But finding my time short, and impressed with the utter impossibility of forming a sounder opinion on controverted questions in Jerusalem than in my own room at home, I vowed to separate myself from any of the party who mentioned "the tower Hippicus"—one of the bones, a sort of hip-joint, of great importance, and the subject of great contention, in the reconstruction of the old skeleton. I preferred to receive, if possible, some of the living impres-

sions which the place was fitted to impart; to get, if possible, a good fresh whiff from the past—an aroma, if not from Jerusalem, yet from Nature, unchangeable in her general features, as revealed on the slopes and in the valleys of Olivet, or in the silent recesses around Bethany. I succeeded in doing so, at least to my own satisfaction, from the moment I dropped "the tower Hippicus."

One word more of preliminary remark. Within the walls—if we except perhaps the Temple Area, that one grand spot of surpassing interest in Jerusalem—there is not a street which either the Saviour or his Apostles ever trod. The present roadways, if they even follow the old lines, are above the rubbish which "many a fathom deep" covers the ancient causeway. There is not one house standing on which we can feel certain that our Lord ever gazed, unless it be the old tower at the Jaffa Gate. So let us for the present dismiss every attempt to associate *that* past with "the Jerusalem which now is." We may feel disappointed at this, yet I believe that it must be so. The heavens above and the hills around, not the streets beneath, are the same.

It is modern Jerusalem, then, which in the mean time we must glance at; and the first place which naturally attracts us is the Church of the so-called "Holy Sepulchre."

VII.

THE CHURCH OF THE HOLY SEPULCHRE.

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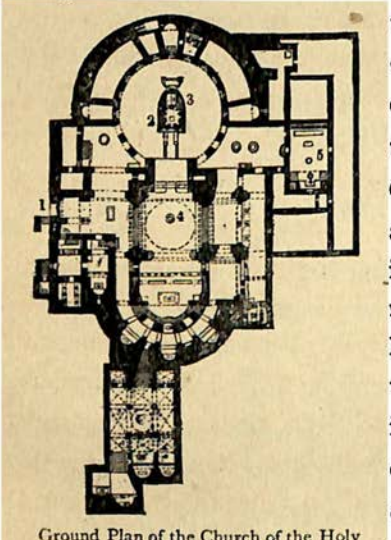
THE CHURCH OF THE HOLY SEPULCHRE.

WE enter an inner court by a narrow doorway. Squatted on every side are rows of Easterns, who are selling, with well-defined profit-and-loss countenances, all the accompaniments of "religious" worship — beads, incense, crucifixes, pilgrim shells, staves, &c. &c. ; while a ceaseless crowd from all lands is passing to and fro.

Now we must understand, first of all, that this church is a very large one, so that under the one roof are several chapels in which different "communions" worship. These do not of course call themselves "sects," for that would look as if the one true Apostolic Church could be divided. Each church only calls every other a sect. But while there is this one true, Apostolic, Catholic Church, as distinct from the sadly divided Protestant

Churches, yet a Protestant, much more an unfortunate Presbyterian, may be pardoned if he does not at once discover the fact when he enters the building—the only one, be it remembered, in universal Christendom where "Apostolic" Churches meet under one roof, to find their unity, as some allege, or their differences, according to others, around the tomb of Christ. The Greek Church, "Catholic and Apostolic," representing, as it does, some eighty millions of the human race, has its chapel, adorned with barbaric splendour, in the centre, where it claims the sole privilege and honour of receiving once a year from Heaven, and of transmitting to the faithful—that is, to the Greeks—miraculous fire representing the Holy Spirit The Latins, as they are called in the East, the Catholics, as they call themselves, or the Papists, as some presume to call them, also have a chapel and service, and loudly profess a very supreme contempt for the Greeks



Ground Plan of the Church of the Holy Sepulchre.
1. Principal Entrance. 2. Chapel of the Angel. 3. Holy Sepulchre. 4. Greek Chapel, and "Centre of the Earth." 5. Latin Chapel.

and their base superstitions—as if they themselves were perfectly innocent of such deceptions, and as if they had not for centuries, until they lost the privilege by accident, shared in the rites and gains of this Holy Fire! The Greeks retaliate by expressing feelings of dislike and horror at "the image worshippers." The Copts and Armenians, as members of the one undivided Church, have also their chapel, whose capacity bears a relative proportion to the number of their followers. I have heard, I think, of one or two other "Catholic and Apostolic Churches;" but these are not represented here. Indeed, apart from possible ecclesiastical reasons, there is really no room for them. For as the church now stands, there is only sufficient space for the worship of those who possess it; and even they are sometimes inconvenienced for want of room when a stand-up fight takes place, and a ring cannot be formed. At the entrance of the church, seated on a divan to the right, are a few respectable, quiet-looking Turks, who stroke their beards, smoke their pipes, and are most benevolent, *douce*-looking men. They are ready at any moment to show their kindness, at the risk of their turbans or even their lives, by throwing themselves between the various Orthodox Christians as they fight their fight of faith with each other even unto death.*

* At the famous Easter fight in the church, some thirty years ago, four hundred lives were lost!

Now, whatever amount of evil may arise from the outward divisions, chiefly as to forms and government, in the Protestant Church, we can hardly conceive it, at this time of day, culminating in open war, ending sometimes in those bloody battles which are witnessed at the only spot on earth where, from close personal contact, the "unity" of the "Holy Orthodox Churches" is fairly tested. We fancy that the "Moderators" of Presbyterian Assemblies, and the "Presidents" of Wesleyan or Congregational conferences, could meet with the Archbishops of the Church of England without giving one another bloody noses, or having such a fight with sticks or mitres as Donnybrook Fair, with all its Bacchanalian orgies, never witnessed. But, after all, we Protestants have nothing to boast of. The state of society in the East has not advanced beyond what it was in Europe, when Episcopalian and Presbyterian in Scotland in the time of the Stuarts, when Calvinist and Arminian in Holland, and Lutheran and Reformed in Germany, manifested not only an inner spirit, but even an outward expression of it, just as unchristian as what has been described in the scenes enacted by earnest but ignorant devotees around the Holy Sepulchre. And if such visible demonstrations of sectarian hate are now well-nigh impossible in most parts of Europe, I am not prepared to say that the spirit which prompted them is extinguished

in any part of it. He who makes any truth which ought to be in the circumference occupy that centre of all truth which belongs exclusively to Jesus Christ, must, sooner or later, get into confusion and out of the "proportion of faith," and, in the end,—just according to the strength of his conscience and the weakness of his spiritual insight or common sense,—become a sectarian, a fanatic, and a consequent hater, in the service, as he imagines, of the God whose name is Love.

Within this famous church, there are certain places and things shown, about whose authenticity all those witnesses for Catholic truth seem agreed. These are all connected with the last memorable scenes in the life and death of Him "who was the Truth." At the entrance of the church, for example, is a broad marble slab, where He was anointed for His burial. The Duke of Modena was kneeling and reverently kissing it as we went in. Close on the left is the spot "where Mary stood while the body was anointing;" and then upstairs and downstairs, in nooks and corners, amidst the blaze of lamps and the perfume of incense, here, and there, and everywhere, are other noteworthy places. What think our readers of such *real* spots as these:—"where Christ appeared to Mary Magdalene as the gardener;" and "to his mother after the resurrection;" and "where his garments were parted;"

and "where He was mocked;" "where He was bound;" where "His friends stood afar off during the crucifixion;" "the prison where He was detained while waiting for the crucifixion;" "the holes in which the three crosses were inserted;" the very "rent made in the rock by the earthquake;" and "the place where the three real crosses were found" three hundred years afterwards, the true cross being discovered by its working a miracle? All these "sacred spots" are marked by altars, crosses, &c. There are also to be seen in this marvellous museum the actual tombs of Adam (Eve unknown) and of Melchizedek, and of John the Baptist, and of Joseph of Arimathea; finally, of our Lord. All these wonders are clustered round a spot which is in its way almost as great a wonder as any of the rest—"the centre of the earth!" One asks, with reasonable curiosity, whether "Protestantism," left to the blind guidance of its own erring private judgment of the Word of God with the Holy Spirit as its interpreter, ever witnessed in any part of the earth to any falsehood, or any error, to be compared with those palpable lies which the "Orthodox" Churches ask us to accept, and this too beside what they believe to be the tomb of Jesus and the place of His crucifixion!

The Holy Sepulchre is not what many people suppose it to be. It is not a cave, or a hole in a rude rock; but a small marble chapel, which rises up from the flat stone floor

The *theory* of this sort of sepulchre is, that the mass of the rock out of which it was originally hewn has been all cut away from around the mere slab on which our Lord's body lay, leaving the slab or *loculus* only, and a thin portion of the original rock to which it adheres; just as we see a pillar of earth rise out of a flat in a railway cutting, marking where the original mass, of which it had formed a part, had been. In its present state, therefore, nothing can be more unlike a sepulchre than this. Not one atom of the original rock—if it is there at all, which is doubtful—is visible, all being cased in marble. What a miserable desecration of the original cave, if it ever existed here! What are we to think of the taste, or judgment, of those who dared to apply hammer or chisel to the holy spot? It might with almost equal propriety be transported now to be exhibited in Paris, London, or New York. There is not a trace existing of its original appearance. This chapel of "the Holy Sepulchre" consists of two small apartments, neither of which could hold above half-a-dozen persons. The whole chapel is but twenty-six feet long and eighteen broad. The first small closet, which is entered between gigantic candlesticks, is called the Chapel of the Angel, as being the place where it is alleged the angel rolled away the stone, a fragment of which is pointed out. Within this, entered by a narrow

low door, is the sepulchre. It is seven feet long and nine broad. The roof is a small dome supported by marble pillars. The marble slab, which, it is said, covers the place where our Lord's body lay, occupies the space to the right of the door as you enter. Over it are placed a few most paltry artificial flowers in pots, with some miserable engravings and votive offerings. Several small candles are always burning. The sale of these candles must yield a considerable revenue to the Church, for every pilgrim offers one, so that tens of thousands must each year be used and paid for. In addition to these candles, an immense number of gold and silver lamps—forty, I believe—are kept burning inside this small vault.

I went on two occasions into the Holy Sepulchre. On the second, I remained in silence beside the attending priest for about a quarter of an hour, and was deeply interested in the pilgrims, who entered in a ceaseless stream to do homage to the sacred spot. They came in, knelt, kissed the stone, prayed for a second, presented their candle, and retired to make way for others. It was impossible not to be affected by so unparalleled a spectacle. These pilgrims had come from almost every part of Europe at least. Greeks from the islands and shores of the Levant; Russians from the far-off steppes of Tartary, clothed in their sheepskin dresses; French, Italians, Germans, and Portuguese, of every age and complexion; old men with

white beards, tottering on their pilgrim-staves; friars and monks, with such a variety of costume and of remarkable physiognomy as could nowhere else be seen;—faces stranger than ever crossed the imagination—some men that might have sat to an artist as his *beau idéal* of cut-throat pirates, and others who might have represented patriarchs or prophets; some women who were types of Martha or Mary, others of the Witch of Endor. The expression of most was that of stolid ignorance and superstition, as if they were performing a mysterious, sacred duty: but of others it was that of enthusiastic devotion. I shall never forget one woman who kissed the stone again and again, pressing her lips to it, as if it were the dead face of her first-born. It was a touch of nature which made one's eyes fill, and was the most beautiful thing I saw in the church, except a fair child with lustrous eyes, who, indifferent to the grand spectacle of bishops and priests, was gazing at the light as it streamed through the coloured glass of one of the old windows.

It was strange to think of those people who had come such distances to this one spot. How many had been hoarding their little fractions for years to defray the expense of the long journey! how long they had planned it! how far they had travelled to accomplish it! —that old Russian for example, with his big boots and

hairy cap! What a thing this will be to them, when they go out of that door, and begin the journey homeward,—to tell all they saw, and to comfort themselves in life and death by the thought of their having made the pilgrimage and kissed the shrine! And stranger far to think of how this stream of superstition, custom, divine love, or call it what we may, poured on through that door for centuries before America was discovered, or the Reformation dreamt of. All thoughts of the more distant past were lost to me in the remembrance of the Crusades, and of old romantic ballads about the mailed men, the lords of many a ruined keep, from the banks of the Scottish Tweed to the castellated Rhine, whose silent effigies in stone, with hands clasped in prayer, have reposed for ages in gorgeous cathedrals, rural parish churches, and far-away chapels on distant islands. My mind was filled with stories that told of how they came to visit this spot, how they parted from their lady loves, and travelled over unknown lands, encountering strange adventures, and voyaging over unknown seas in strange vessels, with stranger crews; how they charged the Saracens in bloody battles, shouting their war-cries, and at last reached—one in a hundred perhaps—this spot so full to them of mystery and awe, here to kneel and pray as the great object and reward of all their sacrifices.

As to whether this is the real sepulchre or not, I am

not competent to give an opinion. As far as I have, as yet, been able to weigh the evidence adduced on both sides of this vexed controversy, it seems to me very fairly balanced. In this case again we must wait until patient and careful "diggings" shall reveal a few more facts about the old walls of Jerusalem. I must refer my readers to the many well-known books which discuss the question, such as those of Dr. Robinson, of America, and Mr. Fergusson, as against Dr. Williams, Mr. Finlay, and De Vogüe, as in favour of the present site. It does not, however, seem to me at all unlikely that the place of Christ's burial should have died out of the memory of the early Church. To the first believers the tomb of the dead Christ would, it appears to me, be soon lost in faith in the living Christ. Golgotha as a place, with its dreadful horrors, would be uncared for in their adoring love of the grand spiritual truths of which it was but the awful threshold. I can therefore quite conceive of St. Paul, for example, when in Jerusalem after his conversion, visiting neither the place of Christ's death nor that of his burial, nor caring thus to "know Him after the flesh," although he held living communion with Him every day in the Spirit. Belief in persons, not places, in living realities, not mere localities, appears to me as much more likely to have characterised the early than any subsequent age of the Church. And just as in

the course of years faith began to grow weak in a living person or in eternal truths, so would it naturally seek to strengthen itself by a visit to places, until it became still weaker by contact with the visible, and the kernel was at last lost in the shell. In the mean time we wait for more light on this subject.

But should the sepulchre of Christ never be discovered —if it lies unknown in some lonely recess among the "braes" overlooking the Kedron,—we are not disposed greatly to lament it.

> "We have a vision of our own—
> Ah, why should we undo it?"

But as these poor pilgrims gazed on the spot where, as they believed, the Lord lay, how one longed to make them also believe, and rejoice much more in the thought "He is not here, but risen!" and to be able, in the strength of his resurrection-life, to rise with Him, and to set their affections on things above, where He sitteth on the right hand of God!

In leaving the Church and its "Holy Sepulchre," I was comforted by the thought, that the Holy Spirit of God, who is perfect love and wisdom, and who dispenses his gifts and graces to every man as He will, can "fulfil Himself" in many ways, can discern and meet the truthful spirit seeking truth, and can impart the truth to it; and that, under wood, hay

and stubble, which are destined to be consumed, many a humble soul may here be building on the true foundation of faith in Christ alone. I also felt the awful responsibility attached to the blessed liberty which, in God's gracious providence, Protestants enjoy; for Protestantism is not itself a religion, but is only the most favourable condition for obtaining religion, and for enabling us to *see* the truth, and to know and love God our Father in Jesus Christ our Saviour.

On the Lord's Day, I had the privilege of worshipping in the church presided over by the good Bishop Gobat. How pure, how simple, how true and refreshing was the service! It was not new to me. Though a Presbyterian, I had read it for months, long ago, abroad, to a congregation, and I have used it very often since then, in similar circumstances, while travelling. I have also read the "burial service" over the dead at sea. I have often communicated at the altar of the Church of England with gratitude; and, in Jerusalem, I was thankful to worship with my brethren according to their forms. And which, I asked myself, was most in accordance with Apostolic practice—this, or that? the forms of the Church of England (and the same question could be asked by me with at least equal force of those of the Church of Scotland), or those of the Church of the Holy Sepulchre, with its incense, pictures, images, and mummeries? It

has been asked which Church "the Fathers" of the earlier and middle ages would recognise as theirs if they rose from the dead and visited the Roman Catholic and Protestant churches? But what, I ask in reply, would have been the judgment of earlier and greater men,—the Apostles? What would St. Paul think? Would he recognise the Church of the Sepulchre as more in accordance with *his* Christianity and his habitual forms of worship, than Bishop Gobat's? Of which would he say, This reminds me of the early Church? It is impossible, I think, to doubt his reply. The Church of the Sepulchre would perhaps remind him of some of the features of the old Temple service which had passed away, with its attractiveness to the eye, and its "carnal ordinances," but not assuredly of *his* Apostolic Church. No, no! Let us have worship in spirit and in truth, freed from all that can hinder, but including all that can assist, the living spiritual man to hold direct communion through Christ with the living God.

VIII.

THE HARAM AREA.

VIII.

THE HARAM AREA.

IT is but as yesterday—immediately after the Crimean War—that this sacred enclosure could be entered by any except Moslems, or those who cared to pass themselves off as Moslems at the risk of their lives. All, without respect of persons, but not without respect of purse, can enter it now. There must no doubt be a few forms gone through, but these your dragoman manages; and they are not more serious than what travellers are familiar with in most European cities, when "orders" have to be obtained, and signed and countersigned by heads of Police or of Government, while the "guide" or "commissionnaire" magnifies the difficulty of getting

them, the secret in every case, East and West, being the old golden key—*backsheesh.* To see the Temple Area the *backsheesh* is pretty heavy, amounting, as far as I can recollect, though I am not certain, to about 1*l.* for each traveller. But never was money paid with more good-will than that which admitted us to the most memorable spot on the face of the whole earth.

The general shape of the Haram, or Temple Area, is nearly a parallelogram, its greatest length being 1500 feet—rather more than a quarter of a mile—and its greatest breadth about 1000. It is surrounded on all sides by walls; some of them to the north and west serving also as walls of houses, which belong chiefly to civil or ecclesiastical officials. The east and south walls are also a part now of the city walls. Only a comparatively small portion of this great open space is occupied by buildings. About the centre is the Mosque el Sakrah (or "Dome of the Rock"), and at the south end the Mosque el Aksah.

The first thing that strikes one on entering this sacred spot is its profound repose. It is for the most part covered with grass, which is green and beautiful, even at this early season of the year. Various kinds of trees, chiefly the dark, tall cypress, are scattered through it. Oriental figures float about with noiseless tread. No sound of busy traffic from the city breaks the silence.

All is quiet as if in the heart of the desert. The spot seems consecrated to meditation and prayer.

As I walked across this green spot once occupied by God's Holy Temple, I cried—"Oh for a voice to utter the thoughts that arise in me!" For who can adequately express the thoughts which here rush upon the mind, wave upon wave in rapid and tumultuous succession, out of the vast and apparently limitless ocean of past history? How profoundly impressive, for example, was the simple fact, that here alone in all the earth was the only living and true God worshipped throughout long ages! Majestic Rome, with all her wisdom, had "changed the glory of the incorruptible God into an image made like to corruptible man, and to birds, and four-footed beasts, and creeping things;" the philosophic and refined Athens had erected an altar "to the unknown God;" but here, in this remote corner of the earth, and in a sequestered spot among the lonely hills, shepherd clans for centuries worshipped Him whom the great nations of the earth still worship as the God of Abraham, of Isaac, and of Jacob.

This spot of verdure is the narrow strait through which, ages ago, the living stream passed which is now flooding the whole earth. If we ask *how* this enduring worship came to be established, our inquiry receives a reply from the Books of Moses, in which its origin and establish-

ment are recorded. In these we read a history of Creation, to which, like a spring rising in the far-off hills, can be traced the mighty river of our religious belief and worship. When one thinks of the state of the world, with reference to its knowledge of God, at the time when Moses wrote, and as contrasted with the period when the Temple with its worship was here located, it is impossible not to recognise in the revealed account of Creation the origin of this and of every true temple erected for the worship of God. There may be in Genesis "difficulties" not yet removed, and "questions" relating to science not yet solved; but greater than these, as mountains are greater than the boulders which are scattered over their surface, is the glorious moral teaching of the narrative. What a protest does it contain, for example, against all idolatries!—what a confounding of them by the mere statement of facts, which, from other independent sources, the most thoughtfully devout arrive at! As we remember how the Shemitic race alone has, in all its branches, ever preserved the faith in one God as distinct from the Pantheism of the East and the Polytheism of the West, we recognise the truth of one of the earliest recorded prophecies, "He (God) shall dwell in the tents of Shem." And verily He has dwelt and revealed Himself in the Tabernacle and in the Temple of the race of Abraham.

From the day in which the old "Tabernacle," or Tent of the Wilderness, was enlarged into the grand Temple of Solomon, what events transacted here rise up before the memory! In vain we attempt to suggest, in the most hurried form, the incidents which make this the most memorable spot on earth. There passes before the inner eye the august founding of Solomon's Temple, with its stately rites, ceremonies, and solemn prayers;—its costly sacrifices, and the presence within it of the mysterious Shekinah. Again, recall the exquisitely picturesque histories recorded in Ezra, Nehemiah, Haggai, Zechariah, until we see the memorable day when the Temple of Zerubbabel was founded, when "the priests and Levites and chief of the fathers, who were ancient men, that had seen the first house, when the foundation of this house was laid before their eyes, wept with a loud voice; and many shouted aloud for joy: so that the people could not discern the noise of the shout of joy from the noise of the weeping of the people: for the people shouted with a loud shout, and the noise was heard afar off." We see the last and greatest temple of all—that of Herod—of which it was said, "The glory of this latter house shall be greater than of the former, saith the Lord of hosts: and in this place will I give peace, saith the Lord of hosts,"—all this passes before our minds, until the vision of the past is closed by the unparalleled horrors

of the destruction of the last Temple by the Roman army, leaving no trace behind except the faded sculptures of some of its holy things on the crumbling Arch of Titus.

But standing here one loves to linger on earlier days, and to recall the holy men and women, the kings, priests, and prophets, who came up to this spot to pray—whose faith is our own, whose sayings are our guide, whose life is our example, and whose songs are our hymns of worship. We seem to hear the majestic psalms of David which have ascended from this spot, and have never been silent since on earth, nor will be until they are absorbed in the worship of the Temple above. Nor can we forget the frightful idolatries, the devilish wickedness, the falsehoods, hypocrisies, murders, blasphemies, which have been here witnessed and punished; the awful denunciations against sin in every form which have been here pronounced; the sieges, famines, destructions, dispersions, weepings, desolations, and restorations, which have here occurred; the prayers which have been addressed, not only from this spot but towards it—by Jonah "out of the depths;" by Daniel from Babylon; by Ezekiel from the banks of the Chebar; by the captives who hung their harps on the willows and wept as they remembered Zion; and by every Jew throughout the world since then! What thoughts, longings, tears, hopes, and joys, of

millions throughout long ages have been thus associated with this Temple.

But what more than absorbs all else into itself as a source of reverential wonder, was the presence here, in his own Holy Temple, of Jesus Christ, "the desire of all nations." How affecting to recall his teaching, within this spot, his holy and awful works here done, his words of love and power here spoken—the incidents of his boyhood, temptation, and ministry down to his last hours, ending, as the result of all, in the establishment of a Church on earth in which each member is himself a priest, a sacrifice, and a temple of the Holy Spirit.

It is not too much to affirm with confidence, that the old Jerusalem will never be forgotten in the "new Jerusalem" throughout the endless ages of eternity!

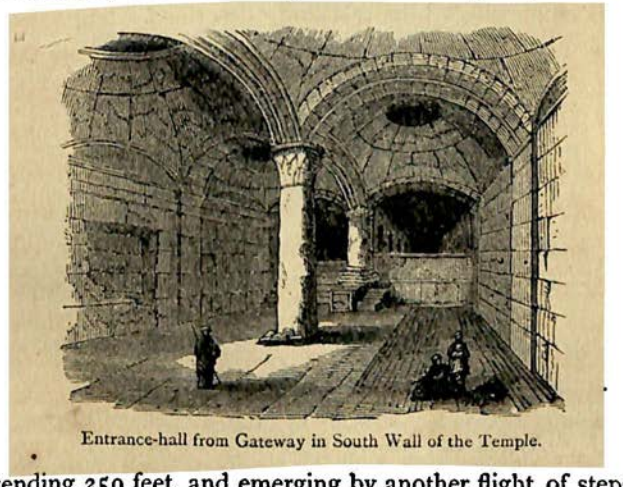
These and such like thoughts passed through my mind, as I trod on this sacred spot—now so calm, silent, dead. The dust of which man is made alone remains and covers all. Not an object meets the eye on which Kings and Prophets, with Jesus and his Apostles gazed, except the Mount of Olives and the blue sky. Yet it may be that those holy feet have trodden the steps of that old passage; and His lips may have drunk from the waters that "made glad the city of God," and with reference to which He on the first day of the feast cried, saying, "If any man thirst, let him come to Me and

drink, and the water which I shall give him shall be in him," as the water is within the Temple, "a living fountain springing up into everlasting life!"

As to the question regarding the exact site of the old Temple, we must wait for further information, which I hope and believe will be furnished by the results of the explorations which are being carried on in Palestine, and will be prosecuted among the ruins of Jerusalem. Not one stone, as far as we know, of that memorable building exists, above ground at least. We know only that it was built *somewhere within the area known as the Haram es Sherif*, or "Temple area," as it is generally called, and which I have already described. The limestone rock at the north-west corner, was most likely the site of Antonia, and what is called the Pool of Bethesda was probably its *fosse*. I think it also more than probable that the rock, afterwards described, which is inside the Mosque, was the site of the Altar of Burnt Offering, and that the Temple consequently occupied the space in the centre of this area, nearly where the Mosque is now built. But more than this I know not.* There are, however, some very old remains which were no doubt connected with the Temple. There is a noble

* I omit from this edition all I said in my former one as to the site of the Temple. Later information has shaken my faith in the theory I then defended, and I have got no better to substitute for it.

gateway in the south wall — itself an old boundary of the Temple, and having cyclopean stones in it— which is described by Josephus. To see it one has to enter it from within the Haram, as the gateway is built up from without. There is no monument of antiquity in Jerusalem so interesting as this. We have an entrance-hall about 50 feet long and 40 wide, and in the centre a column of a single block of limestone, 21 feet high and about 18 feet in circumference. The sides of this hall are built with huge stones. A flight of steps at the end leads to a long passage, sometimes horizontal, sometimes a gentle inclined plane, but ex-



Entrance-hall from Gateway in South Wall of the Temple.

tending 259 feet, and emerging by another flight of steps into the area above.

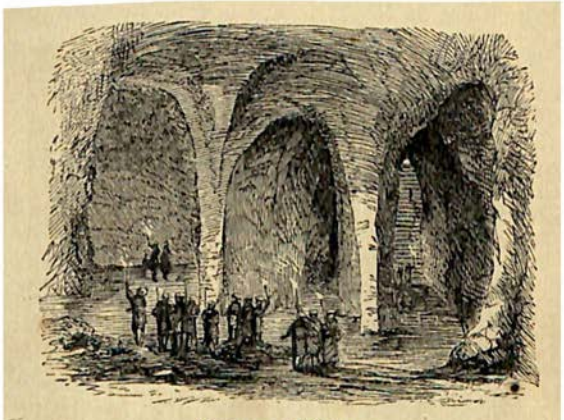
There are also remarkable arches at the south-east corner, which are supposed to have been erected for

Underground Buildings in the South-east corner of the Haram es Sherif.

the purpose of providing airy chambers for keeping the cattle required for the Temple service.

There are also, inside of the area, underground cisterns, filled from natural springs, which no doubt supplied the Temple with the water that was constantly required in its services. These cisterns are

now got at by an opening like a well or chimney, near the Mosque el Aksah.



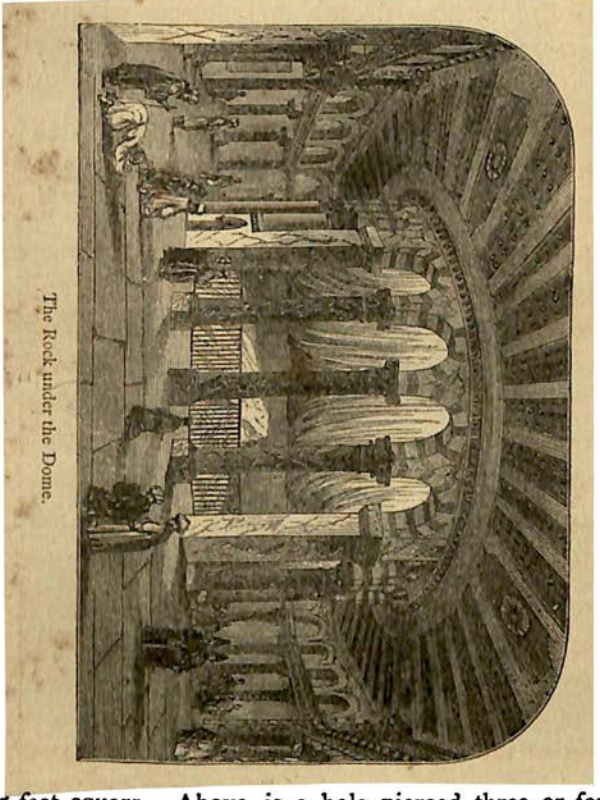
Underground Cisterns.

But we must leave the site of the old Temple, with its solemn memories, and enter El Sakrah, or the "Mosque of Omar"—as it is commonly, though we think erroneously, called—and which occupies nearly the centre of the great Haram enclosure. On entering it, one is immediately and irresistibly impressed by its exquisite proportions, its simplicity of design, and wonderful beauty. Nowhere have I seen stained-glass windows of such intense and glowing colours. Indeed one of the marked features of the interior is the variety and harmony of colour which pervade it, caused by the marbles of the pillars and walls—the arabesque ornaments and

Arabic inscriptions—the rich drapery hanging in the sunlight—with the flickering touches everywhere of purple and blue and golden yellow, from the Eastern sun pouring its splendour through the gorgeous windows; while every Oriental worshipper, as he bends in prayer or moves about in silence, displays some bright bit of dress embroidered with gold or silver in the looms of Damascus, or possibly of India, and thus adds to the brilliancy of the scene.

What chiefly attracts the eye and arrests the attention, however, within this temple of Mahometan worship, is an object which one never saw before in any such place, or beneath any roof, except the sky. Immediately under the dome, and within the circle of marble pillars which support it, with silk drapery overhanging it like a banner over the tomb of a hero, lies a huge rock! It is not the work of a cunning artist, shaped to a form of beauty, or to serve any useful or religious purpose, but an unhewn mass, rough as a boulder on a mountain-side or on the sea-shore. This stone is about 60 feet long and 50 broad, and rises about five feet above the level of the floor, or fifteen feet above the original surface of the ground. It is but the highest point of the solid rock of which the whole area is composed, thus permitted, as it were, to project above the surface, and to intrude bare, unadorned, into the mosque.

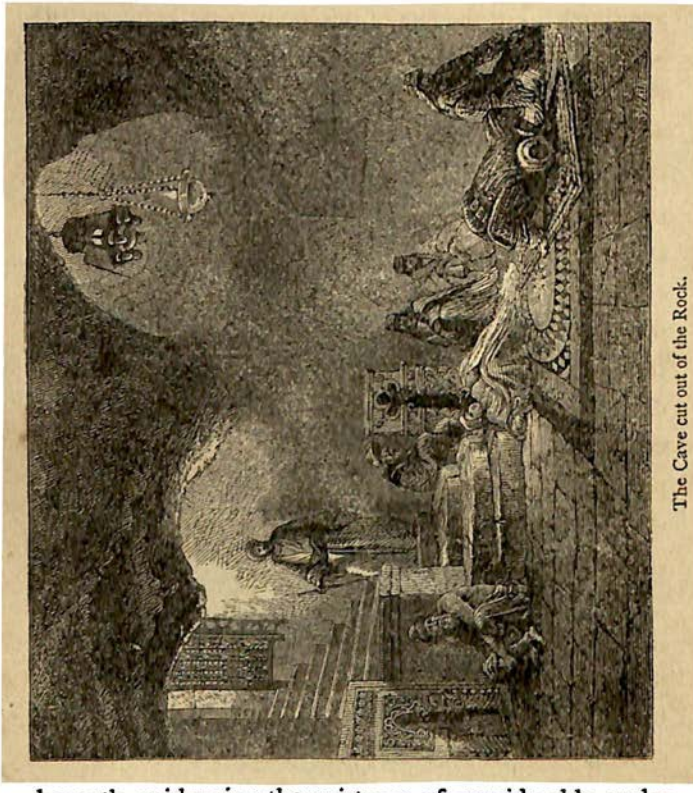
Moreover, it has on the south-east side an open door, cut through the solid stone, which leads by a few steps down to an excavated chamber, about eight feet high and



The Rock under the Dome.

15 feet square. Above, is a hole pierced three or four feet through the top of the rock, with a lamp suspended near it. Such is the general appearance and position of

this famous spot. I may add, that if one stamps on a circular marble stone about the centre of the cave, seen in the engraving, hollow sounds and echoes are heard



The Cave cut out of the Rock.

beneath, evidencing the existence of considerable underground excavations.

"But what," the reader asks, "means this rock or

rocky summit? Why has it been preserved, and preserved *here* as a holy and revered thing?" A question to be asked, verily! but one by no means so easily answered. For the fact of this stony mass being in such a place has given rise to a great controversy, which still rages, though only, of course, with such calm, suppressed, and reticent energy as archæologists and antiquaries are capable of in a case where passion decreases with the square of the distance, in time, that separates them from the subjects of their inquiry.

Without attempting in a few lines to state the arguments which have been brought forward in support of the various conflicting theories, or presuming to give any decided judgment on so complicated a question, let me endeavour, however meagrely, to satisfy, or rather to prompt, the curiosity of those of my readers who may wish to know how this stone has become such a stumbling-block.

(1) The most prosaic account of it is, that the hole through the rock to the lower chamber was the opening to a well for the fortress of Antonia, the excavations below the cave being but a part of the great natural cisterns which honeycomb the Temple area. But the fortress did not stand here; and even if it did, that would not account for the well of a barracks ever becoming a holy and consecrated spot.

(2) Was it then, as some suggest, the stone on the summit of Mount Moriah on which Abraham offered up Isaac? This is a mere conjecture, without any evidence whatever to support it, and the difficulty of accepting it is increased by the fact that Mount Gerizim is claimed —and that not without weighty and, as Dr. Stanley thinks, and as I also presume to think, highly probable reasons—to be the mountain of Abraham's sacrifice.

(3) A more probable supposition is, that this place was the threshing-floor of Araunah (or Ornan) the Jebusite, which David bought, and on which he erected the great Altar of Sacrifice. The account given in Scripture of this transaction is as follows :—

"And the angel of the Lord *stood by* the threshing-floor of Ornan the Jebusite. And David lifted up his eyes, and saw the angel of the Lord stand between the earth and the heaven, having a drawn sword in his hand stretched out over Jerusalem. Then David and the elders of Israel, who were clothed in sackcloth, fell upon their faces. . . . Then the angel of the Lord commanded Gad to say to David, that David should go up, and set up an altar unto the Lord in the threshing-floor of Ornan the Jebusite. And David went up at the saying of Gad, which he spake in the name of the Lord. And Ornan turned back, and saw the angel; and his four sons with him hid themselves. Now Ornan was threshing wheat. And as David came to Ornan, Ornan looked and saw David, and *went out of the threshing-floor*, and bowed himself to David with his face to the ground."—1 Chron. xxi. 15-21.

We read also that—

"Solomon began to build the house of the Lord at Jerusalem in Mount Moriah, where the Lord appeared unto David his father

in the place that David had prepared in the threshing-floor of Ornan the Jebusite. ' And he began to build in the second day of the second month, in the fourth year of his reign."—2 Chron. iii. 1, 2.

This narrative, it is alleged, makes all clear. On the summit of this stone, *by* the threshing-floor, stood the angel of the Lord, seen as if between earth and heaven. Beside the stone was the threshing-floor; its top was the place for winnowing the grain, which was poured down through the hole into the cave, that was at once a granary and contained a well. In this cave, moreover, Ornan and his sons hid themselves, and "came out" to meet David. On the summit of the same rock was afterwards erected the great altar, which was reached by steps, or by a gradual ascent, and *through the hole* the remains of the sacrifices and the blood were sent into the cave below, to be disposed of by the Levites, and to be carried by some means or other without the Temple through its subterranean excavations.

(4) The last, and which will appear to our readers to be the most improbable and astounding theory is, that this cave was the "true sepulchre of our Lord!"

Mr. Fergusson, the propounder and defender of this theory, broached it fifteen years ago, and has maintained it with great ability and with increasing confidence ever since. He lately visited Jerusalem to test its accuracy still further by an actual inspection of the spot, and has returned more convinced, if possible, than ever.

While this theory is maintained on historical grounds, yet it is based chiefly on architectural. But I cannot enter into this controversy.*

* De Vogüe, I may state, admits the Mosque to be of Byzantine architecture, but applied by Moslem builders. In his recent great work on the Temple, he gives translations in French of some of the Arabic inscriptions in the Mosque, which read as a protest against the Christian Church and the known Christian beliefs. They are such as the following:—"Praise be to God, He has no Son"—"He does not share the empire of the universe"—"Jesus is the Son of Mary, sent by God, and his Word"—"Do not say there is a Trinity of God," &c. As Mr. Fergusson remarks, there is not a word in the Arabic inscriptions of David, Solomon, or even Mahomet, but of "Jesus the Son of Maria," whose name appears four times.

IX.

JERUSALEM WITHOUT THE WALLS.

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ONE day I visited the Jews' "wailing place," certainly one of the most remarkable spots in the world. It extends 120 feet along the cyclopean wall which surrounded the sacred inclosure, and begins about 300 feet from the south-west corner. No familiarity with the scenes enacted at this place made it hackneyed to me. To see representatives of that people met here for prayer—to see them kissing those old stones—to know that this sort of devotion has probably been going on since the Temple was destroyed, and down through those teeming centuries which saw the decline and fall of the Roman Empire,

and all the events of the history of Modern Europe —to watch this continuous stream of sorrow, still sobbing against the old wall, filled me with many thoughts. What light amidst darkness, what darkness amidst light; what undying hopes in the future, what passionate attachment to the past; what touching superstition, what belief and unbelief!* I found some slips of paper, bearing prayers written in neat Jewish characters, inserted between the stones of the old wall.

I also took a stroll into the Jews' quarter on Mount Zion. It is a wretched, filthy place, squalid as the "liberties" of Dublin, the "slums" of London, or the "closes" of Glasgow or Edinburgh. As I intend in another chapter to give my impressions of the Jews of Palestine, I shall say nothing more about them here.†

* Dr. Wilson, in his 'Lands of the Bible' (vol. ii. p. 615) quotes a passage from the liturgy of the Sephardim Jews, used when lamenting at the place of wailing. Among its petitions are the following: "Oh, may their Father in his infinite mercy compassionate his orphans, and gather his dispersed to the pure land! For he is high and exalted; he bringeth down and raiseth up; he woundeth and healeth; killeth and restoreth to life. O Lord, return to thy city! build thine holy oracle, dwell in thine house, and gather thy scattered flock. O thou who renewest the months, collect the saints, both men and women to the erected city. O may this month be renewed for good! and may it please God, who is mighty in works, thus to command!"

† I cannot find any more authentic evidence of the population of

I saw one sight on Mount Zion which vividly recalled the past, and that was a band of lepers. They inhabit a few huts near one of the gates, and are shut off by a wall with only one entrance to their wretched small court and mud dwellings. Ten of those miserable beings came out to beg from us—as they do from every one who is likely to give them alms. They sat afar off, with outstretched arms, directing attention to their sores. There was nothing absolutely revolting in their appearance; but it was unutterably sad to see so many human beings, with all the capacities for enjoying life, thus separated from their kind, creeping out of their mud dens day by day through a long course of years to obtain aid to sustain their miserable existence; and then creeping back again—to talk, to dream, to hope. And for what?

Jerusalem than what has been given by 'Murray' (1858), which is as follows :—

Moslems	4,000
Jews	6,000
Greeks	1,500
Latins	1,200
Armenians	280
Syrians, Copts, &c.	150
Greek Catholics	110
Protestants	100
	13,340

The best account of the "religions" of Palestine that I am acquainted with is that given by Dr. Wilson, in his 'Lands of the Bible.' Finn's account of one sect of the Jews—the Spanish "Sephardim"—is also valuable.

No friendly grasp from relation or friend, no kiss from parent or child, from husband or wife. Dying daily, they daily increase in misery and pain. What more vivid symbol of sin could have been selected than this disease, which destroys the whole man from the crown of the head to the sole of the foot, slowly but surely eating his life away, and which is incurable save by the power of God? May He have mercy on all such! The sight of those sufferers in such a place suggested many a scene in Bible history, above all the compassion of Him who "bore our sicknesses," and restored such pitiable objects to the health and joy of a new existence. Nor could one fail to associate the helpless condition of lepers with that of the people who still occupy Zion, whose houses are built over the dust of what was once their own stately palaces, and whose unbelief is now, as it was in the days of the prophets, like unto a deadly leprosy with wounds that have not yet "been closed, neither bound up, nor mollified with ointment." Their sin has been so visibly punished, that we may truly add:—"Your country is desolate, your cities are burned with fire: your land, strangers devour it in your presence, and it is desolate, as overthrown by strangers. And *the daughter of Zion* is left as a cottage in a vineyard, as a lodge in a garden of cucumbers, as a besieged city."

And before passing beyond the walls, I would like to

mention one remarkable feature of Jerusalem. It is its power, in spite of its dust and decay, to attract to itself so many forms of religious thought. The fire which once blazed in it with so pure a flame, still flickers amidst smoke and ashes. Moslem, Jew, and Christian, of every sect, reside among its ruins, or make pilgrimages of devotion or of inquiry to its hallowed precincts. Among these are always a few *outré* characters from Britain or America, possessed by a monomania on the second advent or the return of the Jews. I heard of more than one such who took up his abode in sight of Olivet, daily watching for the Saviour's personal return, and daily preparing to receive Him or some of his followers as honoured guests. On every other point they were, I believe, sane and sensible people. One old man had for years lived in eager expectancy of the great event. His hair grew white, but his hopes were ever fresh and young. He lived alone. At last one day he was missed; and when search was made, he was found dead in his solitary room. But his hopes, however false they were, as based on an error of judgment, yet sprang from personal attachment to his Redeemer, and would not be put to shame, though fulfilled otherwise and more gloriously than he had anticipated. Those who, longing to see the sun rise, search for it with straining eyes at too early an hour, or in the wrong quarter of the heavens,

will yet rejoice in its beams when it does rise, though it be later, and in another point of the horizon. We may apply to such disappointed dreamers what Mrs. Barrett Browning so touchingly says of the poet Cowper :—

" Like a sick child that knoweth not his mother while she blesses,
And drops upon his burning brow the coolness of her kisses ;
That turns his fevered eyes around—'My mother ! where's my mother ?'
As if such tender words and looks could come from any other !

" The fever gone, with leaps of heart he sees her bending o'er him,
Her face all pale from watchful love, the unweary love she bore him !—
Thus woke the poet from the dream his life's long fever gave him,
Beneath those deep pathetic eyes which closed in death to save him.

" Thus ? Oh, not *thus !* no type of earth could image that awaking,
Wherein he scarcely heard the chant of seraphs round him breaking,
Or felt the new immortal throb of soul from body parted,
But felt those eyes alone, and knew — '*My* Saviour ! *not* deserted !' "

But we must go out of the city and " view the walls of Jerusalem which were broken down."

Among the first places I went to was the subterranean quarry, the entrance to which is near the Damascus Gate. The nature of this place will be best understood by supposing an immense excavation, out of which it is highly probable the stones were quarried to build the city, so that Jerusalem may be said to be reared over

one vast cavern, the roof of which is supported by huge pillars of rock, left untouched by the workmen. We entered by a narrow hole, through which we had to creep; and after stumbling over *débris* down hill and up hill, we found ourselves in the midst of a labyrinth of vast caves, whose high arches and wide mouths were lost in darkness. On we went tottering after our feeble lights, long after we lost sight of the eye of day at the entrance. With cavern after cavern on the right and left and ahead of us, we got *eerie*, and began to think, in spite of the lucifers—unknown as an earthly reality to the Jews of old—what would become of us if our lights went out. It is difficult to say how far the quarries extend. I have been told by one who has examined into their inner mysteries, that there are walls built up which prevent thorough exploration. But I have no doubt they will, as many incidents in history indicate, be found to extend to at least the Temple Area. It is more than likely that the stones of the Temple were here prepared; for "the house when it was in building was built of stone made ready before it was brought thither, so that there was neither hammer nor axe, nor any tool of iron heard in the house while it was building." The stone is a white limestone, and must have given a pure and bright appearance to the Temple.

We saw some blocks half cut out of the living rock,

but never completed. I know not why such unfinished works as those stones, partly prepared yet never used, are so impressive. They are very old—older than any inhabited building on earth, and ages older than most of our modern ruins—yet they look young, like children that were embalmed at birth. They are monuments, not of the past so much as of an expected future—enduring types of designs frustrated, of plans unexecuted, and of hopes unrealised—symbols of the ignorance of man, who plants and builds, until a sudden coming of God revolutionises the world to him. Why, we ask, did not this or that stone fulfil its intended destiny? What stopped the work? What hindered the workman from returning with his mallet and chisel to finish it? What caused the abrupt pause which has not been disturbed for centuries? Was this stone designed for the home of some rich young man, who was so absorbed in it that he could not follow Christ? or was it intended for some one anxious to enlarge his barns? or for some Dives to erect a new banqueting-hall? or for some bridegroom to prepare a home for his bride? Or did the Sanhedrim commission it for the repair of the Temple? Then why did it remain here? Were the workmen called away by the Crucifixion, or by the scenes of the day of Pentecost? Or did strange news come of the army of Titus encompassing the city? and was the work of usefulness, of

covetousness, of luxury, of domestic peace, or of piety, put off till a more convenient season? The stones yet wait in silence, and may wait probably till all man's works are burnt up. And still we go on in the old way, planting and building, marrying and giving in marriage, rearing palaces, barns, and churches, as if the earth were firm beneath our feet, and time would never end. But we must not indulge in dreamy meditations, lest our lights go out, and the stones at last serve some purpose by entombing our skeletons. We reach the daylight, which, first like a brilliant star, and then a sun, pierces through the gloom from the narrow entrance.

Reader, it is no easy task, this work of exploration, even in a small way, or of sight-seeing in any way, with such a temperature. You can fancy what it is to be obliged to poke through holes like a rat, flit through caverns like a bat, and then come into daylight only to pace along under a glare from white rocks, white stony roads, white walls, the whole man dusty and deliquescent, and inclined to say with Sir John: "Thou knowest, Hal, that a yard of uneven ground is a mile to me." There is no shelter anywhere except under an olive, when there is one, or in the cool recesses of a house, which is not to be thought of until evening. I long to bring the reader to Olivet and Bethany; but let us first take a rapid glance at some of the spots south of the city.

Whoever takes the trouble to examine the accurate plan of the site of Jerusalem and its environs given at page 197, will notice the prolongation of the hill south of the Haram Area. It is steep, and in some places rocky, though on the whole carefully cultivated in terraces, with many olive and fruit trees. This was the Ophel of the olden time. The valley which bounds it on the west was called the "Tyropœan," which, from the Damascus Gate southward, divided the Temple Mount from Mount Zion. The valley to the east of Ophel is that of Jehoshaphat, or the Kidron, separating Jerusalem from the Mount of Olives. It attains its greatest depth immediately beneath the south-east angle of the Temple. Another valley, it will be observed from the plan, curves in from the west. This is the valley of Hinnom or Tophet. Perhaps there is no place on earth where so many thoughts of human crime and misery suggest themselves, as among the rocky sepulchres of this valley. It must always have been an out-of-the-way, dark, secluded spot. There is no other like it near Jerusalem. The horrible Molech fires which consumed many an agonised child, once blazed among these stones. "They have built the high places of Tophet," said the Prophet Jeremiah, "which is in the valley of the son of Hinnom, to burn their sons and their daughters in the fire; which I commanded them not, neither came it into

my heart." On the opposite side, on the Hill of Corruption, where the village of Siloam is now built, Solomon set up his idols in the very sight of the Temple; as it is written :—"Then did Solomon build an high place for Chemosh, the abomination of Moab, in the hill that is before Jerusalem, and for Molech, the abomination of the children of Ammon." It was these abominations which Josiah cleared away:—for "he defiled Tophet, which is in the valley of the children of Hinnom, that no man might make his son or his daughter to pass through the fire to Molech." "And the high places that were before Jerusalem, which were on the right hand of the mount of corruption, which Solomon the King of Israel had builded for Ashtoreth the abomination of the Zidonians, and for Chemosh the abomination of the Moabites, and for Milcom the abomination of the children of Ammon, did the king defile." As if to complete the painful associations, there is pointed out among the rocky hills of Hinnom, immediately below the Hill of Evil Counsel, Aceldama, or "the field of blood," where, into a caverned pit, now built over, bodies were cast, with hardly any other burial than to lie there under a little sprinkling of earth until turned into corruption. It has been closed for a century, but will ever be associated with the traitor. No wonder this spot in the valley of Hinnom, with its wickedness, its consuming

fires, its vile moral as well as physical corruption, should have become, as Tophet or Gehenna, a type of Hell.

The inhabitants in the immediate neighbourhood of these infamous spots do not redeem their character. The villagers of Siloam partly live in houses and partly in the old rock tombs, and are notorious thieves—such a collection of scoundreldom as might be the joint product of gipsies, vagabond Jews, and the lowest Arabs. Their presence in Siloam makes all the Mount of Olives unsafe after nightfall to those who are not protected.

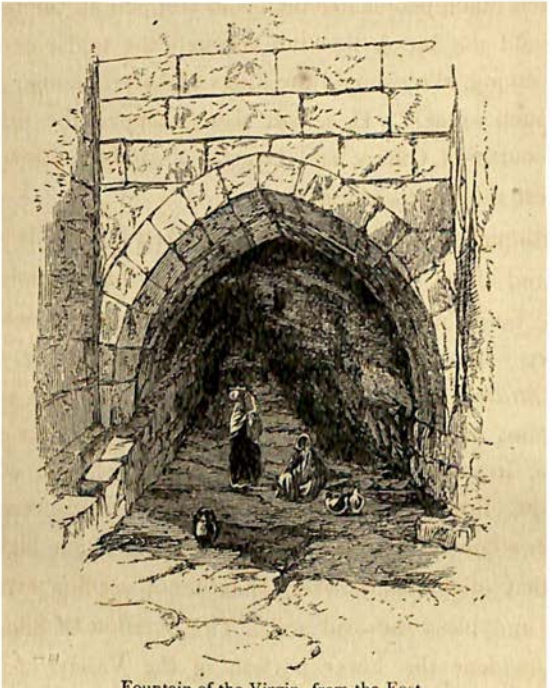
But the name Siloam recalls a very different scene, and one for ever associated with the Saviour's power and love. There is no dispute whatever regarding the site of the old Pool, which has never been challenged.* It is about 53 feet long, 18 feet wide, and 19 feet deep. It is surrounded by an old wall, which, it has been suggested, is the same as that of which it is recorded: —"Shallum built the wall and the pool of Siloam by the king's garden." Above it is an arch, under which a flight of steps descends to the water, that flows past, clear and pure, into the pool. In this the blind man was sent to wash. This one fact sheds a light and glory over the whole place. We can easily picture to ourselves the poor man proceeding with his clay-covered eyes, his anxious and eager faith subduing his doubts and

* Its position is marked 28 on the plan at p. 197.

fears, until the water bathes his face, and then!—he sees for the first time those very rocks, perhaps that same old wall; and better than all, with the eye of the spirit, as well as of the flesh, he sees Jesus as "the Sent" of God, and as his Saviour. It is not the realising merely of this miracle or of any others as historical facts that does us good, but it is the realising of the more abiding and life-giving truth that this Saviour ever liveth, able and willing to open the eyes of all men, whom sin hath blinded, and to "give light to those who sit in darkness." It has been proved that this Pool of Siloam is fed from sources which extend towards Zion, and possibly Moriah. It is conducted down to the valley opposite the village of Siloam, where it flows out a sparkling stream, round which women were merrily washing clothes, and men giving drink to their horses, as we passed. A conduit also has been traced, which connects it with the Fountain of the Virgin, which is still higher up the valley,* and is reached by a descent of twenty-six steps. It exhibits the curious phenomenon of an intermittent fountain, ebbing and flowing at certain intervals, which is explainable on the principle of the syphon. This stream is no doubt connected with the great reservoirs under the Temple. It cannot, however, be identified with the Pool of Bethesda and the "moving of the waters;" but it is

* Marked 17 on the plan at p. 197.

more than likely that that fountain, if ever discovered and cleared out, will exhibit the same phenomenon.



Fountain of the Virgin, from the East.

There is no city in the world, certainly not in the East—if we except Damascus—more abundantly supplied with water than Jerusalem, not only from its innumerable private cisterns, but also from its natural springs. Many of these were filled up by Hezekiah with much trouble:—for "he took counsel with his princes and his mighty

men, to stop the waters of the fountains which were without the city; and they did help him. So there was gathered much people together, who stopped all the fountains, and the brook that ran through the midst of the land, saying, Why should the kings of Assyria come, and find much water?" Hezekiah also "stopped the upper watercourse of Gihon, and brought it straight down to the west side of the city of David."

Earthquakes, which have often shaken these hills and shattered these rocks, must have affected the supply of water, both in Jerusalem and throughout the whole country. The existing supply, notwithstanding, *if properly utilised and distributed*, would be more than sufficient, not only for the inhabitants of the city, but also for the irrigation of the neighbourhood; while if wells were dug through the limestone strata, we see no reason why, in a country whose average rainfall is much higher than that of Scotland, water should not yet flow everywhere and bless the arid soil. The overflow of Siloam now gladdens the lower portion of the Valley of Jehoshaphat, near En-Rogel, which was once "the king's gardens." This spot is green and fertile still; and when one has seen what water has done for the gardens of Urtas, he can understand how beautiful those king's gardens must once have been.

But let us to Olivet and Bethany.

The moment one leaves the gate of St. Stephen, which leads down to the Kidron, and thence to Olivet, he is struck with the unartistic roughness of the road. The last thing on earth one would expect to see would be a city gate without a road leading to it. Yet there is no road here but a path steep and rough as one on the face of a Highland hill. A timid man feels uneasy in riding down it, unless his horse be very sure-footed. He has every reason for fearing a *glissade* over the loose small stones. It has to all appearance been left to take care of itself since history began. But it is nevertheless the old highway to Bethany and Jericho. Fortunately, the descent is only two or three hundred feet. At the bottom, when the dry bed of the brook Kidron is passed, one finds himself in the angle between the road which leads directly over Olivet to Bethany and that which leads to the same point along the side of the hill to the right. At this spot tradition has placed the Garden of Gethsemane,—an unlikely place, in my humble opinion, from its want of seclusion; for those roads must always have met here. How many quiet nooks are there not up the valley! The priests, with their usual taste and their wonderful talent for spoiling every place which they wish to make sacred after their own fashion, have enclosed the fine old olives, which it is assumed mark the spot, within a square of high whitewashed walls, like what might sur-

round a graveyard, and have made an ugly garden with flowerbeds within it! I did not enter the place. Who, were it even the actual spot, could indulge in such feelings as it is calculated to excite, with a monk at hand exhibiting as holy places "the cave of agony," "the spot where the disciples fell asleep," "where Judas betrayed Him," &c.? It would have been great enjoyment could I have sat alone, under those patriarchal trees, with the rough hill-side or a bit of greensward beneath my feet. As it was, I preferred an undisturbed and quiet look over the wall at the grand old olives. It was something to think of all they have witnessed during the centuries in which they have been silently gazing at Jerusalem and on passers by.

I ascended Olivet for the first time by the road which rises almost directly from Gethsemane to the mosque on the top of the hill, and which from thence descends to Bethany. This is the road along which David walked in sorrow when he fled from Absalom, to take from the summit of Olivet his last sad look, for a time, of the beloved and holy Jerusalem which he had himself conquered—where he had reigned as the first obedient king "according to God's own heart"—and where he had contributed to the Temple-worship those songs of praise which have been more enduring, more expressive of the sorrows and joys of the Head of the Church and of all its members, than it was given even to himself to know;

and which will be sung by generations yet unborn. It is a rough ascent—a commonplace country road—in no way associated with kingly processions of any kind, any more than was David's own humble attire as a shepherd lad in the days of his youth with his splendour as a king or his immortal fame as a man.

The view from the mosque on the summit of Olivet, or from a Waly a short way beyond it to the east, is famous. All travellers make a point of seeing it. If not the most extensive or commanding in Palestine, it is on the whole the most interesting, although familiarity with Jerusalem takes away from the effect which it would have on any one who could see it as his first great prospect. Towards the east, and between us and the Dead Sea, we see the Wilderness of Judea,—bare, bleak, and desolate, as would be the rocky bottom of the sea, if upheaved and left to bleach beneath a burning sun. We see also a bit of the Dead Sea—more than 3000 feet below us—"lying dead in its trough." Though about 12 miles off, it looks very near. It appears hot and steamy, with a misty haze hanging over it. One cannot but associate all that is wild, lonely, and mysterious with this dismal lake. It does not suggest one noble thought, one act of greatness or goodness, done by man or woman alive or dead, to shed over it a redeeming ray of glory. We can also trace the course of the Jordan from its line

of green vegetation. The memories of the great and good which it recalls are a relief to the mind. Its entrance into the Dead Sea seems like life losing itself in death. There rises also before the eye—bolder and grander than when seen from Neby Samwil—the great eastern wall of the ridge of Moab, the separation between modern civilisation and almost unknown Arabia, with its ancient cities, far-spread pasture lands, arid wastes, powerful tribes, and primeval traditions. Standing on Olivet, one fully realises the contrast between East and West, with Palestine as their connecting bridge.

From this point one also takes in at a glance, informed no doubt by some previous observation, the general topography of Jerusalem. He is struck with the sort of promontory abutting from the general table-land on which it is built; with the wonderful defence against ancient modes of warfare afforded by the valleys that, like deep ditches, surround it on east and south, hindering any enemy from coming near its walls; with the strong military positions which were afforded by the principal eminences within the city—such as the Temple Area, separated from Zion by the valley of the Tyropœan, and the high ground of Acra and Bezetha—eminences distinctly visible. The hills that surround Jerusalem are also visible, not only in the circling sweep of Olivet and its spurs, but further off in the ridge of which Neby

Samwil is the highest point, and which is seen as a wall between the city and the heathen tribes dwelling by the sea. One can see how it rested like an eagle's nest on a rocky eminence, or like a lion's lair, visible from every side, yet not to be approached with impunity; and how Jerusalem visibly bore the motto of dear old Scotland:—"Nemo me impune lacessit." The compactness of the city must also have been one of its marked features. There were no human habitations beyond its gates. There it lay like a chess-board, with its men, bishops, knights, and castles, within the walls, while all beyond was painfully empty and bare;—limestone everywhere, with little of green to relieve the eye. The inner eye alone is satisfied.

But if the reader will again take the trouble to look at the small plan of the city and its environs (p. 197), he will have a better idea of Jerusalem than any mere verbal description could give him.

I descended to Bethany by the same road which David took when Hushai met him, and when Shimei cursed him.

I was not disappointed with the appearance of Bethany. Had it been bare rock it would still have been holy ground. The village consists, as all others in Palestine do, of brown mud hovels with encircling mud walls—dust, confusion, children, dogs, and poverty. Everything is squalid as in Skibbereen, Connemara, or, alas! some villages in the Hebrides. But yet there are patches of

greenery and trees to be seen, and the singing of birds to be heard; while the broken ground, and glens, and "braes," with the glimpses into the deep descent which leads to Jericho, save it from being commonplace, and give to it a certain wild, sequestered, Highland character of its own. When it was well cultivated and well wooded, it must have been of all the places near Jerusalem the most peaceful, as well as the most picturesque.

It is not possible, in such a spot, to be silent upon the miracle which will for ever be associated with Bethany. What though all that can be said may have been already said on the subject, still, like an old familiar melody, one loves to repeat it, and tries to reproduce the holy feelings of faith and adoration which it was intended to excite. What a comfort, for example, to the "common people" of all lands, is the thought that "Jesus loved Martha and Mary, and Lazarus,"—that He found rest and repose for his weary heart in the loving responses of this family, who, it may be, were quite unknown to the big and busy world of Sanhedrim and Synagogue in Jerusalem! How strengthening to know that those whom He loved were yet left in the profound mystery of a great sorrow, utterly unexplainable for a season. How strange that their brother Lazarus was permitted to sicken, die, and be buried; without even one word or comforting message from their Friend, their Lord and Saviour, who had

nevertheless heard and answered the prayers of the very heathen, and had healed their sick and raised their dead, in some cases without his even being asked to do so,—yet who came not to those He most loved when they most needed Him! This silence was a dark cloud over the home of Bethany, and why then wonder that it has often since brooded over homes as beloved? How full of holy teaching, which ought to lighten us in our sorrow, is it to remember that the Lord, in spite of appearances to the contrary, was all the while solving the intricate problem, how to do most good, not only to Lazarus himself, and to Martha and Mary, but also to the disciples and the Jews!—and that He was during this time pondering the awful question in regard to Himself and the world, whether it was God's will that He should by raising Lazarus hasten his own death! And is it not inexpressibly touching and humiliating to our shortsighted unbelief, to see how Martha and Mary had their faith weakened in his love, as if He could have "overlooked their cause,"—an unbelief which was expressed in their words, "If thou hadst been here our brother had not died," which implied the rebuke, "And why wert thou not here?"

What a revelation too of a Saviour's love are his tears, and his groans within Himself, occasioned by the heart-breaking spectacle, not of death which He was about to

change into life, but of faith in Himself dying out in the very bosom of his best beloved. This sorrow of his was love manifested in its deepest, truest, divinest form. For while many can weep with us or for us, because of the death of a friend—a human sorrow which all can understand, and more or less share; yet how few—none, indeed, but those who share the holy sympathies of Jesus—can weep for us because of our sin, or because our faith in God is dying or dead! Twice only did He weep—on this occasion, and when entering Jerusalem a few days after from this same Bethany, on his road to death, through a conspiracy occasioned by his having raised Lazarus to life. And these tears were also shed on account of the same terrible unbelief. Think of it, reader! To be suspected of want of love, as Jesus was, when, to raise His friend from the grave, He had resolved to die Himself, if God so willed it! Mary must have felt this, when, full of unspeakable love, she anointed Him for His burial.

Again, what a *rehearsal* was here, in this otherwise commonplace village, of the glorious time when we and our dead shall hear the same voice, and come forth from our graves, to sit down to a glorious feast above, with our happy social life restored!*

* The English translator of Renan's 'Vie de Jésus' informs us in his preface that "the great problem of the present age is to preserve

We returned from Bethany by the old road from Jericho, which first ascends from the village for about 100 yards, then descends along one side of a wady which opens out from the roots of Olivet, and, ascending the opposite side, debouches on the high ground leading across the flank of Olivet to Jerusalem. It there reaches a point opposite the south-east angle of the Temple, and from thence rapidly descends to Gethsemane. The place where Jesus beheld the city and wept over it is

the religious spirit, whilst getting rid of the superstitions and absurdities that deform it, and which are alike opposed to science and common sense." The manner in which M. Renan endeavours to get quit of the resurrection of Lazarus, is an illustration of how he would solve this problem. As to the part played by those whom Jesus loved in this supposed miracle, he says:—"It may be that Lazarus, still pallid with disease, caused himself to be wrapped in bandages as if dead, and shut up in the tomb of his family." Jesus acquiesced in this pious fraud; but, as M. Renan observes, "in the dull and impure city of Jerusalem, Jesus was no longer Himself. Not by any fault of His own, but by that of others, His conscience had lost something of its original purity. Desperate and driven to extremity, He was no longer His own Mentor. His mission overwhelmed Him, and He yielded to its torrent." Such was the conduct of Him of whom M. Renan is pleased to say: "All ages will proclaim that, among the sons of men, there is none born greater than Jesus." We can but hope, for the sake of France, if not of humanity, that M. Renan himself is greater far in common honesty than he represents Jesus to have been. But after reading such sentiments, the tears of Jesus for the unbelief that wounded Him supply some comfort. We remember, too, how the Apostle Paul was once, like M. Renan, "a blasphemer," yet how he obtained mercy: a pattern to all who should hereafter believe in the name of Jesus.

unquestionably that point. There Jerusalem suddenly bursts on the sight, but upon descending a short distance further down the hill the view of it is rapidly concealed by the Haram wall.

It is impossible to journey along this road without having one's thoughts filled with the scenes of that memorable day. But these, as well as the locality, have been so beautifully and accurately described by Dean Stanley, that I am persuaded those of my readers who have not access to his book will be obliged to me for transcribing his description instead of attempting one of my own :—

"In the morning, He set forth on His journey. Three pathways lead, and probably always led, from Bethany to Jerusalem; one, a long circuit over the northern shoulder of Mount Olivet, down the valley which parts it from Scopus; another a steep footpath over the summit; the third, the natural continuation of the road by which mounted travellers always approach the city from Jericho, over the southern shoulder, between the summit which contains the Tombs of the Prophets and that called the 'Mount of Offence.' There can be no doubt that this last is the road of the Entry of Christ, not only because, as just stated, it is, and must always have been, the usual approach for horsemen and

for large caravans such as then were concerned, but also because this is the only one of the three approaches which meets the requirements of the narrative which follows.

"Two vast streams of people met on that day. The one poured out from the city, and as they came through the gardens whose clusters of palm rose on the southern corner of Olivet, they cut down the long branches, as was their wont at the Feast of Tabernacles, and moved upwards towards Bethany, with loud shouts of welcome. From Bethany streamed forth the crowds who had assembled there on the previous night, and who came testifying to the great event at the sepulchre of Lazarus. The road soon loses sight of Bethany. It is now a rough, but still broad and well-defined mountain track, winding over rock and loose stones; a steep declivity below on the left; the sloping shoulder of Olivet above on the right; fig-trees below and above, here and there growing out of the rocky soil. Along the road the multitudes threw down the boughs severed from the olive-trees through which they were forcing their way, or spread out a rude matting formed of the palm-branches which they had already cut as they came out. The larger portion—those, perhaps, who had escorted Him from Bethany—unwrapped their loose cloaks from their shoulders, and stretched them along the rough path, to

form a momentary carpet as He approached. The two streams met midway. Half of the vast mass, turning round, preceded; the other half followed. Gradually the long procession swept up and over the ridge, where first begins 'the descent of the Mount of Olives' towards Jerusalem. At this point the first view is caught of the south-eastern corner of the city. The Temple and the more northern portions are hid by the slope of Olivet on the right: what is seen is only Mount Zion, now for the most part a rough field, crowned with the Mosque of David and the angle of the western walls, but then covered with houses to its base, surmounted by the Castle of Herod, on the supposed site of the palace of David, from which that portion of Jerusalem, emphatically 'The City of David,' derived its name. It was at this precise point, 'as He drew near, at the descent of the Mount of Olives,'—may it not have been from the sight thus opening upon them?—that the hymn of triumph, the earliest hymn of Christian devotion, burst forth from the multitude, 'Hosanna to the son of *David!* Blessed is He that cometh in the name of the Lord. Blessed is the kingdom that cometh of our father *David.* Hosanna . . . peace . . . glory in the highest.' There was a pause as the shout rang through the long defile; and, as the Pharisees who stood by in the crowd complained, He pointed to the 'stones' which, strewn be-

neath their feet, would immediately 'cry out' if 'these were to hold their peace.' *

"Again the procession advanced. The road descends a slight declivity, and the glimpse of the city is again withdrawn behind the intervening ridge of Olivet. A few moments, and the path mounts again; it climbs a rugged ascent, it reaches a ledge of smooth rock, and in an instant the whole city bursts into view. As now the dome of the Mosque El-Aksah rises like a ghost from the earth before the traveller stands on a ledge, so then must have risen the Temple tower; as now the vast inclosure of the Mussulman sanctuary, so then must have spread the Temple courts; as now the gray town on its broken hills, so then the magnificent city, with its background—long since vanished away—of gardens and suburbs on the western plateau behind. Immediately below was the valley of the Kidron, here seen in its greatest depth as it joins the Valley of Hinnom, and thus giving full effect to the great peculiarity of Jerusalem seen only on its eastern side—its situation as of a city rising out of a

* I was surprised to find on one occasion, when standing with my brother at this spot on the Mount of Olives, that other two of our party who stood at the corner of the Haram wall on the other side of the valley, could distinctly hear our words addressed to them when spoken in a loud and clear voice. The priests in the Temple may have thus heard the very words of the loud and jubilant song of triumph which welcomed the Messias.

deep abyss.' It is hardly possible to doubt that this rise and turn of the road, this rocky ledge, was the exact point where the multitude paused again, and He, 'when He beheld the city, wept over it.'

"Nowhere else on the Mount of Olives is there a view like this. By the two other approaches above mentioned, over the summit and over the northern shoulder of the hill, the city reveals itself gradually; there is no partial glimpse, like that which has been just described as agreeing so well with the first outbreak of popular acclamation, still less is there any point where, as here, the city and temple would suddenly burst into view, producing the sudden and affecting impression described in the Gospel narrative. And this precise coincidence is the more remarkable because the traditional route of the Triumphal Entry is over the summit of Olivet; and the traditional spot of the lamentation is at a place half-way down the mountain, to which the description is wholly inapplicable, whilst no tradition attaches to this, the only road by which a large procession could have come; and this, almost the only spot of the Mount of Olives which the Gospel narrative fixes with exact certainty, is almost the only unmarked spot, — undefiled or unhallowed by mosque or church, chapel or tower,—left to speak for itself, that here the Lord stayed his onward march, and here his eyes beheld what is still the most

impressive view which the neighbourhood of Jerusalem furnishes, and the tears rushed forth at the sight.

"After this scene, which, with the one exception of the conversation at the Well of Jacob, stands alone in the Gospel history for the vividness and precision of its localisation, it is hardly worth while to dwell on the spots elsewhere pointed out by tradition or probability on the rest of the mountain. They belong, for the most part, to the 'Holy Places' of later pilgrimage, not to the authentic illustrations of the Sacred History." *

I spent my last Sunday in Jerusalem on the Mount of Olives. It was a day never to be forgotten; one of those heavenly days which cannot die, but become part of one's life. Alone, with no companion but my Bible, I went along the Via Dolorosa, passed out by St. Stephen's gate, descended to Gethsemane, and from thence pursued the old road already described, which leads to Bethany and Jericho, by the western slope of Olivet overlooking the valley of Jehoshaphat. At the summit of the short ascent a few ledges of limestone rock, carpeted with greensward, crop out beside the path, and afford a natural resting-place, of which I availed myself. The old wall and the well-known corner of the Haram area were immediately opposite me, and so visibly near in the pure transparent atmosphere that the stones could

* 'Sinai and Palestine,' pp. 190-194.

be counted, and the green tufts of the plants among them. The day was of course cloudless and hot, but it was not oppressive, for the air was stirred by a gentle breeze with a mountain freshness in it. Though the city was so near, with most of its people pursuing their usual avocations both within and without the walls, yet no sound disturbed the intense repose except, strange to say, the crowing of cocks, as if at early morn, and the shouts of a solitary peasant who was urging his plough across the once busy but now deserted slopes of Ophel. I gazed on Jerusalem until it seemed to be a dream—a white ghostly city in the silent air. My thoughts took no fixed shape, but were burthened with a weight, almost oppressive, from ages of history; or were lost in the presence of some undefined source of awe, wonder, and sorrow. I was recalled, however, to what was very near when I opened my Bible, and read these words: "*As He went out of the Temple** one of His disciples saith unto Him, Master, see what manner of stones and what buildings are here! And Jesus answering said unto him, Seest thou these great buildings? There shall not be left one stone upon another, that shall not be thrown

* Was this by the Double Gate in the south wall I have already described, with the great stones all around, and which was, as far as I can judge, the one by which He would pass from the Temple towards Olivet?

down. And as *He sat upon the Mount of Olives over against the Temple*, Peter and James and John and Andrew asked Him privately, Tell us, when shall these things be? and what shall be the sign when all these things shall be fulfilled?" And if Jesus on His way to Bethany "sat upon the Mount of Olives *over against the Temple*," there is certainly no place I could discover which was so likely to be the very spot as the one which I occupied. Here, in this holy place untouched by the hand of man, unnoticed, and apparently unknown, I read the prophecies, parables, and exhortations of our Lord uttered in the hearing of His holy Apostles, and recorded for all time in the 24th and 25th chapters of St. Matthew. They include, among others, the prophecies of His first coming at the destruction of Jerusalem, then in her glory, now so desolate—with his second coming at the end of the world; the parables of the ten virgins and of the ten talents, and the trial of love at the last judgment—all ending in the touching announcement, "Ye know that after two days is the feast of the passover, and the Son of Man is betrayed to be crucified!" "All these sayings" I read undisturbed while sitting over against the old wall within which the Temple once rose in its strength and glory, but not one stone of which is now left upon another.

While pondering over the words of Christ, I was

struck by seeing near me a fig-tree, with its branches putting forth leaves, and in some places young figs. The unexpected illustration of the words I had just read, as here first uttered, "When the fig-tree putteth forth leaves, ye know summer is nigh," brought to my mind that surely these were spoken at the same season of the year as that in which I read them, and I was at once reminded that the day was Palm Sunday, the anniversary of the very time when our Lord had wept here over Jerusalem, and had also delivered those discourses.

When in Palestine I felt that there were times in which the past seemed so present, Christ and His word so living and real, that had any one suddenly appeared and said, "I saw Him and heard Him," I should not have been surprised; and this day was one of them.

From this spot I went to that other, very near, where our Lord wept over Jerusalem. I shall not attempt to express here what those human tears seem to me to reveal of "the mind of Christ," the Son of God and the Son of Man, regarding man's sin; what they reveal of man's loss, not only to himself but also to his Saviour; and of the unutterable love that *would* save, as well as of the mysterious wilfulness that would not be saved. For though it is difficult for a minister of the Gospel to refrain from uttering his thoughts on such profoundly

interesting topics, yet it is necessary to impose some restraint on their expression, as almost every spot in Palestine is a text for such meditations.

There is one feature of the view from this spot which I was not prepared for, and which greatly impressed me. It is the Jewish burying-ground. For centuries, I know not how many, Jews of every country have come to die in Jerusalem that they might be buried in the valley of Jehoshaphat. Their wish to lie here is connected with certain superstitious views regarding the Last Judgment (which they believe is to take place on this spot), and certain privileges which are to be then bestowed on all who are here interred. And thus thousands, possibly millions, of the most bigoted and superstitious Israelites, from every part of the world, have in the evening of life flocked to this the old "city of their solemnities," that after death they might be gathered to their fathers beneath the shadow of its walls.

I never saw a graveyard to me so impressive. Scutari is far more extensive, and more terribly deathlike. But from its huddled monuments and crowded trees, it is impossible to penetrate its dark and complicated recesses. Here, there are no monuments, and no trees. Each grave is covered by a flat stone with Hebrew inscriptions, and has nothing between it and the open sky. These stones pave the whole eastern slope of the valley.

Every inch of ground where a human body can lie is covered. Along the banks of the Kidron, up the side of Olivet, and across the road leading from Bethany to Jerusalem, stretches this vast city of the dead. As a place of burial it differs from almost every other on earth, in being, as no other is, a witness to a faith that is firm, decided, and uncompromising until death. It is not therefore merely the vast multitude who sleep here, but the faith which they held in regard to their Messias, that makes this spectacle so impressive, especially when seen from the spot where He had wept over Jerusalem. Remembering all the wanderings of the lost sheep of the house of Israel, all they had suffered, since the Lord had mourned for them standing here, and their long and dreary night of unbelief in His mission and in His love, His words had, if possible, a deeper and more awful meaning. I seemed to see him standing again and weeping here, and addressing those who crowded up to the very place where He had stood and wept while on earth, and again saying to them, "O Jerusalem, Jerusalem! how often would I have gathered thy children together even as a hen gathereth her chickens under her wings, and ye would not!" "O that thou, even thou, hadst known the things of thy peace; but now they are hid from thine eyes!"

And when the question as to the future hope of Israel

was here suggested, how vividly did the scene before me realise the vision of the Prophet and at the same time furnish the only answer I could give to the question :—"The hand of the Lord was upon me, and carried me out in the Spirit of the Lord, and set me down in the midst of the valley which was full of bones, and caused me to pass by them round about: and, behold, there were very many in the open valley; and lo, they were very dry. And he said unto me, Son of man, can these bones live? And I answered, O Lord God, thou knowest. Again he said unto me, Prophesy upon these bones, and say unto them, O ye dry bones, hear the word of the Lord. Thus saith the Lord God unto these bones: Behold, I will cause breath to enter into you, and ye shall live: and I will lay sinews upon you, and will bring up flesh upon you, and cover you with skin, and put breath in you, and ye shall live; and ye shall know that I am the Lord. So I prophesied as I was commanded: and as I prophesied, there was a noise, and behold a shaking, and the bones came together, bone to his bone. And when I beheld, lo, the sinews and the flesh came up upon them, and the skin covered them above; but there was no breath in them. Then said he unto me, Prophesy unto the wind, prophesy, son of man, and say to the wind, Thus saith the Lord God; Come

from the four winds, O breath, and breathe upon these slain, that they may live. So I prophesied as he commanded me, and the breath came into them, and they lived, and stood up upon their feet, an exceeding great army. Then he said unto me, Son of man, these bones are the whole house of Israel: behold, they say, Our bones are dried, and our hope is lost: we are cut off for our parts. Therefore prophesy and say unto them, Thus saith the Lord God, Behold, O my people, I will open your graves, and cause you to come up out of your graves, and bring you into the land of Israel. And ye shall know that I am the Lord, when I have opened your graves, O my people, and brought you up out of your graves, and shall put my Spirit in you, and ye shall live, and I shall place you in your own land: then shall ye know that I the Lord have spoken it, and performed it, saith the Lord."

Before I returned to Jerusalem I wandered among the solitudes of Olivet—hardly knowing where. I sat and read my Bible under one tree, and then under another; descended some glen, or unknown and solitary nook, feeling only that this was Olivet, and that the whole hill was consecrated by the Saviour. But one experience which possessed me I remember with gratitude; and it was, of the presence of Christ everywhere, and of the

true worship of God not being on this mountain or that, but wherever any child is found to worship Him in spirit and in truth. I was not tempted even to fancy, on that holy day, that Christ was nearer to me, or prayer more real in Jerusalem or on Olivet, than when I entered "into my closet and shut the door" amidst the every-day world of Glasgow. And so, while I thanked God with my whole heart for having permitted me to visit these spots, which shed such a light on the history of the Holy One who in the flesh had lived and moved among them, I felt, if possible, still more thankful for the conviction, now deepened, that the poorest in my parish at home—the busy artisan, the man or woman in the dark lane, the crowded alley, or the lonely garret —could, through simple faith and childlike love, enjoy the presence, the grace, and the peace of Christ, as truly as if they were able to make a pilgrimage to the Holy Land, and to worship, on the Lord's Day, among the recesses of Olivet, or on the spots consecrated of old by the bodily presence of the Saviour. Most thankful was I for knowing that the Person, not the place, was holy—that His love was not local but universal; and that not only among the silent hills of Palestine, in Jerusalem, Nazareth, or Tiberias, but in our crowded cities, common-place villages, highland glens, and in

every nook and corner of the great palace of our Father, Jesus may be known, loved, obeyed, and glorified. With thanksgiving, I repeated on Olivet:—

"There are in this loud stunning tide
Of human care and crime,
With whom the melodies abide
Of th' everlasting chime,—
Who carry music in their heart
Through dusky lane and wrangling mart,
Plying their daily task with busier feet
Because their secret souls a holy strain repeat."

X.

THE NEIGHBOURHOOD OF JERUSALEM.

X.

THE NEIGHBOURHOOD OF JERUSALEM.

THE JORDAN, THE DEAD SEA, AND MAR SABA.

LIKE all travellers in Palestine, we of course paid a visit to the Jordan and Dead Sea.

To accomplish the journey, we were advised to take a guard. The very proposal threw a certain air of romantic danger over the expedition. I almost began to regret that I had no supply of bullets for my revolver; and to become painfully doubtful of its even being free from rust, to say nothing of the trustworthiness of the caps, should the trigger ever be drawn. But if it came to fighting, which I sincerely deprecated as involving a most unworthy position for a clergyman, I had fortunately no doubt whatever of my utter incapacity to hit either man or horse, should I be

fool enough to try; and was confident that I would adopt no other course in the event of a "scrimmage," than that of either yielding with all grace to the Ishmaelite, or, if possible, galloping off. There was no use, however, in speculating as to how one would feel or look, if stripped and robbed in the wilderness. It was enough to know that we had resolved to see certain places, and that an escort was necessary, come weal or woe.

Let me illustrate the position of a modern traveller wishing to see the Dead Sea, by a parallel case which might have occurred to a Sassenach wishing to visit Loch Lomond in the days of the Sheik Rob Roy, when his tribe of the Gregarach were in possession of one side of the lake. The traveller, we will suppose, reaches Glasgow on horseback a few weeks after leaving London, and brings with him a letter of introduction to Bailie Nicol Jarvie from some Scotch merchant in the metropolis. He applies to the Bailie for advice as to the safest manner of accomplishing his purpose of seeing the frontier wilderness of the Highlands. The magistrate speaks of its danger; and is ready, over his ale in the Saltmarket, to narrate his own adventures and escapes at Aberfoyle—but comforts the traveller by the assurance that the red-haired Sheik, Rob, happens to be in town; that he is a friend of his, having more than once saved

him from the clutch of the Pasha Provost; and that he will easily arrange for a guard, on black-mail being paid. The Sassenach smiles at the idea, points to his fire-arms, talks contemptuously of the savage Gregarach, enlarges on the grandeur of the Saxon, and resolves to go with his own servant John only. The Sheik hears this, and vows vengeance for being thus done out of 5*l.*, which would supply him with powder and shot for months. So he summons his henchman, the Dugald Cratur, and tells him to be off to the Wady of Balmahā, and there assemble half a dozen of his tribe, to lie in wait among the heather and behind the rocks with their long guns, until they see a white-faced Sassenach, with trousers, coming along,—then to fire some powder, rush at him with a yell, roar Gaelic in his ear, rob him,—but do no more. "The next chiel," adds the Sheik, taking a snuff, "will be more ceevil." Thus would act in all probability the Rob Roy of the Taamireh, Allaween, Anazi, Beni Sakker, or any other tribe. No doubt at Loch Lomond the Graham might dispute the right with the Gregarach of keeping the Wady of Balmahā as a preserve or net for travellers, and they might accordingly fight Rob or Dugald, when travellers were under their protection and paying them black-mail. So might the Anazi fight the Taamireh. Still it is better for every reason to pay and take your chance, assured that then

you are, in ordinary circumstances — the extraordinary being easily ascertained before leaving Jerusalem—quite as safe in going to most spots in Palestine as to most spots in Europe, especially Italy. And there is one real advantage gained by such arrangements, that is the security given, and respected, that any property stolen will be replaced.

A tall Arab Sheik, in a shabby dressing-gown, with turban above, and bare legs thrust into clouted shoes below, did us the honour of squatting himself on our divan one evening, and of agreeing to protect us with the lives of all his tribe. The trifling sum asked for this service, it must be presumed, expressed the small extent of our risk and the little value put upon the lives of the warriors who might be sacrificed, rather than that put upon their honour.

The day before we started I was loitering in the streets and by-lanes of the city seeing what I could see. When opposite the Austrian Consul's house I was attracted by a troop of Arab horsemen drawn up in loose array. A handsomely-dressed Turk was calling over their names. They had formed the guard, I was told, of the Duke of Modena from Jaffa to Jerusalem, and were now being paid off. In my life I never beheld such a set of ragamuffins! The horses were far superior in their breeding to those who rode them; they were small, thin, and

wiry, but with a life in their eyes and a defleshed firmness of muscle which marked them as fit for enduring hard work. Their riders wore the usual Arab dress. They had kaffiahs bound with cord round their heads; their cotton or camel-hair garments were sufficiently thin and loose; their feet were stuck into coarse leather sandals or boots; and they were accoutred with long spears and guns slung over their backs. Their faces were studies! Each rose from its own neck a distinct individual face, with all the essentials of a face, but these were arranged with an art which I had never seen before, concentrating scoundrel in every feature, and forming a combined whole to me quite unparalleled. I singled out two or three, and pictured to myself the feelings of any decorous parson or sensitive lady, who might fall into such hands on the lonely and bituminous shores of the Dead Sea, and who might endeavour to read their fate in the expression of such countenances! One man, a black, seemed to me the personification of animal ugliness.

Next day, when our escort was mustered, I discovered among them my black friend, and some of my other studies of human villany. But I am bound in justice to add, that, after having been politely introduced to them, and making their acquaintance through our mutual friend Hadji Ali, and having done all I could to discover the

cloven foot in them, the impression made upon me was, that they were all very good-natured and obliging fellows, —inclined no doubt, like all the children of Jacob as well as of Esau, to *backsheesh*, but on the whole pleasant and agreeable, and I should think much in advance of the Caterans of old. I have no doubt that, in the event of a fight, they would have fired their guns in a way I could not have done mine; but I have also no doubt that had I bolted they would have accompanied me (in kindness no doubt), and have even led the way far ahead.

We clattered over the stones of the Via Dolorosa, passed through St. Stephen's Gate, ascended the slope of Olivet, skirted the mud hovels of Bethany, and immediately began the rapid descent of the gorge leading for about twenty miles to Jericho. This road has been made for ever famous, not so much, strange to say, by the fact that along it our Lord journeyed, as by his glorious parable of the Good Samaritan, in which the religion of charity, and his own universal love to his "neighbour," are so grandly illustrated.

The descent from Jerusalem to the Dead Sea is, as the reader knows, a half greater than that from Jerusalem to the Mediterranean. In round numbers, it is twice 1300 feet from Jerusalem to the Mediterranean, three times

1300 from Jerusalem to the surface of the Dead Sea, and four times 1300 to the *bottom* of the Dead Sea. We had thus, in the short space, to make a descent of 3900 feet to the *shore* of the Dead Sea.

The part of the descent immediately below Bethany is the steepest. There is a path here of loose stones and smooth rock, which rapidly plunges into the head of the long valley. It must have been up this steep our Saviour toiled, on his momentous journey from Jericho to Bethany. And to the summit of this ascent, or possibly from it, gazing along the windings of the glen, must Martha and Mary have turned their longing and expectant gaze for the coming of the Saviour to heal their brother Lazarus. Up this road the wondering crowd had accompanied Him from Jericho, with one joyful man among them, the blind beggar Bartimeus, who, having received his sight, beheld with a greater sense of novelty and wonder, than any traveller before or since, those wild scaurs and rocky uplands—unless indeed his eyes were fixed on one object only, Jesus, the Son of David, who had mercy on him.

On reaching the bottom of this rapid descent, and passing a well and the ruins of an old khan, our road ran right along the bottom of the valley. It was a bare, bleak, dry, limestone bit of scenery, but not tamer or more uninteresting than many places which I have

traversed, even in Scotland. But after a few miles, when we got entangled among broken uplands and deep gorges, lonely, wild, and dreary in the extreme, things began to have a wilderness and Dead-Sea look. We rested at a spot well known to every traveller, near an old inn or khan now in ruins, which was famous as a sort of rendezvous for brigands, and where Sir Francis Henneker was robbed and wounded forty years ago. We did not, however, even catch a glimpse of man or boy prowling near. Was this the "inn" alluded to by the Saviour, to which the good Samaritan is represented as bringing the suffering stranger? It may have been some well-known spot like this, the parable gaining, to those who heard it, more vividness and reality by a local allusion. I may mention here, that, strange to say, this was the only part of our journey in Palestine where we saw any signs of cruelty. Two Arabs going to Jericho were driving before them a miserable skeleton-looking horse with a knee hideously diseased. The brute could hardly touch the ground with its agonised limb, but ever and anon it did so, leaving spots of blood on the road. It was vain to expostulate with its drivers; so for the sake of our own feelings, as well as for the sake of the wretched creature, we resolved to purchase it and shoot it. The skin alone, we thought, could be of any value to its owners; and our dragoman agreed that our offer

of 100 piastres, about 1*l.*, was therefore a handsome price. But it was indignantly refused, and 1000 piastres demanded! And so the brute was driven on, at a rate too, which, fortunately for us at least, enabled it to get so far ahead that we lost sight of it. Another act, equally out of harmony with the spirit of the good Samaritan, was perpetrated by our escort. They seized a lamb from a flock and drove it on before them. We expostulated as earnestly as did its owner, but the deed was justified by the chiefs on some principle of black-mail which in their opinion made the claim a right, though we more than suspected it to be a robbery. So much for the unloving spirit still seen on the way from Jericho to Jerusalem.

Soon after passing the old khan, we entered a narrow path full of interest. Immediately below us, to the left, was a deep gorge that cut its way through bare rocky precipices, between which, 500 feet down, a fresh full mountain-stream rushed along to the plain of the Jordan. This was the Wady Kelt, and in all probability the brook Cherith where Elijah was supported during the famine. And here, as if confirming the conjecture, we noticed many ravens, and heard their hoarse croak echoing from the wild precipices. We saw remains of old aqueducts, and other buildings. The precipices were also dotted here and there with cave-like holes, the

first mementoes we had seen of the old hermits who once lived here, like grey bats, nourishing their strange religious life. Remains of old chapels, in which they had worshipped and had caught some glimpses of a higher life and of a better country, were visible on the heights.

On and down we went, winding through this arid waste, until at last we saw the plain of Jericho stretching below us, dotted with verdure produced by the mountain springs, and stretching, a grey flat with patches of wood here and there, until its bare shore-like surface was fringed, ten miles off, by the line of vegetation shading the unseen and deep bed of the Jordan. Beyond the Jordan rose the grand ridge of Moab, and to the right appeared the northern bay of the Dead Sea. Down, down, we crept, always thinking we would in a few minutes reach the lowest level, yet always finding a lower still. But every lane has a turning, and so had ours; and right glad were we when it turned to the left, as the shades of evening were drawing over us, and we saw our white tents, pitched where those of many a thankful and weary traveller had been pitched before, under the Quarantania, and near the Ain es Sultân, or Fountain of Elisha.

Oh, what a blessed sight are those tents! What a paradise do they appear to a weary man after a day's

ride, when everything is hot, from the sky above to the earth beneath, and to the very waters under the earth. Your horse begins to neigh, and to pace along with cocked ears, the prospect of fodder being as cheering to him as Mohammed's dinner is to us. And then, after ablutions, how delightful to lean down on the camp bed; and after dinner and pleasant friendly talk about the sights and adventures of the day, to go out in the cool night, with the world of stars all twinkling in the unsurpassed sky of this low region; to catch picturesque glimpses of the Arabs in the dim light around their fires; to *hear* the awful stillness of the silent land: and then to sleep, as motionless as a desert stone!

But before falling into this unconscious state, we here exhibited a few fireworks which we had brought from London (cockney fashion) for the purpose of amusing the Arabs, or maybe with the innocent hope of awing the desert tribes by a revelation of wonder and power.

The musical snuff-box was our *opus magnum*,* but the

* Since mentioning, in a previous section, the grand occasion on which we brought high-class music in our snuff-box to the Gibeonites, I have heard with great pleasure that the Marquis of B——, when he encamped on the same spot, was beset with applications for a display of Hakeem Pasha's art! Our dragoman Hadji Ali being with him, the mystery of these applications was soon explained. In olden time the box would have been the occasion of rearing a fane to Pan or Apollo. But unless some other travellers soon follow our example, we fear the echoes will die out.

Roman candles were our most imposing spectacle. I had the honour, as the Hakeem Pasha, of letting them off in the presence of what the newspapers would describe as an "attentive and admiring audience." They shot aloft with great success, and "fortunately no accident occurred." Our Arabs were delighted, even Meeki smiled, and condescendingly manifested a sense of agreeable surprise. Had any robbers been prowling about the plain looking for plunder, it is more than likely, as we afterwards concluded, that our fireworks, instead of frightening them away, would rather have attracted them to our tents.

We gave our escort a homely supper of rice mixed with various ingredients prepared by the cook. They eagerly seized the food with their fingers, dexterously moulded it, and chucked it into their mouths, as they squatted round the large dish placed in the centre of their circle. In return they danced one of their dances, if dance it could be called where the body and not the foot moved. Twelve of them formed a line, while their chief with drawn sword stood facing them. They then began with a low monotonous chant, or rather howl, to move backwards and forwards, while he moved, and swayed, and ducked, making fantastic movements with his sword. And so on it went, utterly unintelligible to us. It had, of course, a meaning, to one able and

learned enough to appreciate it; but to us it had none, and sundry attempts on Hadji Ali's part to make it plain, only served to convince us that he, too, knew nothing about it. So we were glad when it ceased, and we could retire to our tents without giving offence. These men, let us record it, in spite of their singular abstemiousness and "total abstinence"—or because of these, as "the League" would say—underwent a wonderful amount of physical endurance. During our journey they hunted partridges (which they fired at only when the birds sat) and gazelles along the whole road—now running down the valleys, and again rushing to the tops of the rocks with unwearied perseverance and activity. They managed to kill a gazelle and a brace of partridges, which we bought from them. Yet at the end of their day's journey, which they had made double by their exertions, they challenged us to race them; and for about two hundred yards they kept up with our horses urged to their highest speed, which, however, it must be admitted, was not equal to the Derby stride.

I remembered, while seeing them, the fact of Elijah running before the chariot of Ahab from Carmel to Jezreel. His was not, after all, such a feat of physical strength, considering the state of the roads, and the probably somewhat slow driving of the king, as was that of our Arabs.

Next morning we enjoyed a view of the cliffs of Quarantania, which we had examined rapidly the evening before. The high pyramidal precipice was honeycombed with hermits' cells. A ruined chapel was on the summit. We were afterwards informed by an English clergyman, who, with great difficulty and no small danger (owing to the destruction of portions of the narrow footpaths), had examined them by help of ropes, guides, and cool climbing, that there were interesting remains of Byzantine frescoes in the chapels, still fresh and vivid in their colours. They had, however, no interest as works of art, but only as ecclesiastical remains of a strange and interesting episode in the history of religion.

It is strange indeed to think of the world of thought, politics, and opinions, which interested those hermits, as they crept from cavern to cavern, or sat in groups on their limestone seats gazing from their rocks of sure defence, over the plain, on to the Dead Sea, and wild hills beyond. There some of them lived, no doubt, their fourscore years or more, talking about the Greek Fathers, and the persecution of the Arians, and worshipping, amidst the awful silence of the hills, with the stars and God above, and scenes of desolation and death below; until they died, and were laid beside old friends in a dark cave. Yet our union with these old and gnarled specimens of mortality, in so far as they held

communion with the same Father and through the same Saviour, is more real than we can have with any others on earth who are without God and Christ in the world.

We started at early morn for the Jordan and Dead Sea. The day promised to be hot, if indeed a cool one was ever known at the bottom of this singular hollow since the day it was formed by its restless and hot parents, the earthquake and volcano.

After visiting the Ain es Sultân, and rejoicing in the delicious though not very cool water springing from its limestone cave, we gazed on the great mounds on every side, speculating in vain on their relation to ancient Jericho. It is probable that the first Jericho was here, and that the Jericho of the Gospels was near the spot where the mountain road we had traversed debouched into the plain. The so-called Jericho is modern, and may possibly mark the site of Gilgal.

We struck across the plain to the Jordan. We pushed through a tangled wilderness of low trees, and passed Jericho, that capital of rascaldom, robbery, poverty, and vice, and soon began to pace over the bare flat of the Ghor. What a glorious plain that might be made, producing, as it could do, in full luxuriance, all the products of the tropics! The soil is excellent; the water at command abundant: yet all is a dreary waste. But could capital be applied to distribute the springs of the

Kelt, Ain es Sultân, and El-Duk over the soil; could a few Armstrong guns be placed in round towers to defend the fords of the Jordan, to sweep the plain, and stop the incursions of the Bedouin, there is no doubt the Ghor would again become a paradise.

The sun was already getting hot, and the Jordan seemed to be farther and farther away. We passed in succession, and after considerable intervals, three steep beaches, leading down from a higher to a lower level, and each marking a former shore of the river. These shores may have been occupied for a long period, but more probably only during inundations, and when the Jordan flowed at higher levels. It was not until we descended the fourth beach that we reached the narrow plain through which it now flows. There its muddy and rapid waters rushed in eddying circles like those of a glacier stream, between tangled brushwood of various kinds, and trees, and tall reeds that bent their feathered heads in the quiet air, there being no wind to shake them. On the other side, perpendicular banks of white clay, with the edge of a higher bank appearing beyond, hemmed the water in. It did not seem more than one hundred feet broad. Some of our party and the Arabs bathed in it. I deferred that duty, chiefly from fear of being swept off by the stream, until we reached the Dead Sea. The Arabs revealed a very simple toilet,

consisting merely of a long shirt, and a cotton or camel's hair dressing-gown.

We lingered some time on the bank of the river, cutting walking-sticks for mementoes, and also some bulrush-heads—an innocent amusement verily, and affording a striking enough contrast to boar-hunting and other "manly sports." One or two of our party had tin cases provided in which to carry home some of the water; but I was, alas! too prosaic to take the trouble, having no wish to baptize any child in holier water than that which springs up unpolluted among our own beautiful hills.

As we rode towards the Dead Sea, and turned away for ever from the Jordan, I began to recall all the grand events associated with the river and the plain through which it flowed. Somewhere beyond and above us was Pisgah,* from which that grand man, the Saint Paul of the old dispensation, saw revealed for the first time the vision of his life—the land on which he was not to tread until he appeared on it in glory along with the Messiah

* It is difficult, if not impossible, to discover any point higher than another in the skyline of the ridge which runs parallel to the Jordan, and north of the Dead Sea. Mount Nebo cannot therefore be identified. But this famous point is believed to be the high ridge which rises a little to the east and south of where the Jordan enters the Dead Sea, and which, lying over against Jericho, must from its position command the whole of Palestine.

of whom he had testified. The Jordan was full of memories, dating from the famous day when the ark stayed its waters, and the armies of Israel defiled before it after their long wilderness journey into the Holy Land of Promise—Caleb and Joshua alone connecting them with Egypt—downwards through the times of Elijah and Elisha, Naaman the Syrian, and John the Baptist, until the Lord Himself was consecrated in its waters for the public work of his ministry. Behind us was Jericho, associated with the victories of Joshua, the school of the Prophets, the healing miracles of Jesus;—and holy Gilgal, also long the seat of worship before the Tabernacle was pitched at Shiloh, and the place where Samuel and Saul and David and the ancient Church had prayed, and offered sacrifices, and sung their songs of praise.

How desolate and dreary is all this scene now! It is the haunt of brigands, and the home of a few poor debased peasants. The great forests of palm-trees which filled the plain for miles together, with the fields of sugar-cane, have all disappeared, and tangled thickets of valueless trees and shrubs alone remain. The granaries of corn which could feed the armies of Israel, enabling them to dispense with the manna, have perished: while but a few patches of cultivation are left to testify of the former fertility. Desolation everywhere; and the stones of emptiness! The very sites of Jericho and Gilgal are

uncertain, and wild beasts or wilder men roam where Holy Prophets taught, where the Baptist preached, and where the Son of God performed his miracles of love and power.

When we reached the shore of the Dead Sea, we all gazed in silence on the scene before us. What were our first impressions? Putting aside the associations of God's anger and righteous judgment which are irresistibly suggested by all we know of those degraded races who dwelt somewhere on its borders or on spots where its waters rest, the scene was decidedly pleasing. True, it is not picturesque. The want of life on this part of its waters makes it dull and uninteresting, without, however, giving it the dreary look of many a Highland loch —such, for example, as that darkest and most barren of all I have ever seen, Coruisk in Skye. Nor is the mountain range of its shores apparently "bleak and blasted," like the sides of a volcano, but, generally speaking, it is clothed with what looks like herbage, though it may be but low shrubs; while several beautiful and luxuriant wadies debouch on its shores. And then there was a delicious breeze blowing over it, sending fresh-looking tiny waves to the shore; and the water was so marvellously clear and transparent, and we were so hot and deliquescent, that an ablution was anticipated with peculiar pleasure. It is an error to suppose that there is

actually no life of plant or animal possible within the influence of its so-called noxious vapours. Plants do grow on its border; and further south, birds are seen not only flying over it but swimming or wading in its waters. No fish have as yet been discovered in it; and this no one who touches its waters will be surprised at, assuming that fish have tastes like men! But one must draw upon fancy more than on what is seen by the eye to make the Dead Sea so very dreadful as it is generally supposed to be.

We bathed of course, and the experiences gained thereby are such as its waters alone afford. Every one knows what a horrid taste it has. No mixture of vinegar, alum, and sulphur, or any similar compound which would fret the skin and pucker the tongue, can give any idea of it. One must taste the deceptive liquid, so clear and beautiful, yet so vile and nauseous, in order to appreciate its composition; and one must let his lips, cracked and blistered with the sun, and his face, punctured with mosquitoes and other insects, be touched by this limpid wash, before he can estimate its energy. Its buoyancy is also well known, but one must swim through its heavy waters to realise the novel sensation of being unable to sink. The first attempt to swim never fails to produce shouts of laughter,—a dangerous levity, as giving admission to the water by the lips. The moment we breast

its waves, we are astonished to find our feet fly up to the surface, and all our old ideas of equilibrium vanish. The most comfortable attitude is either floating on the back, or sitting in the water with a gentle movement of the hands to balance our water-seat; and then the ease, quiet, and composure with which our object can be accomplished, inaugurates a new idea in aquatics. Some travellers tell us that they have dived, or attempted to dive into these depths. The very idea would have terrified me! I felt uneasy once when losing connection with terra firma, and had a vision of a depth of possibly 1300 feet, near if not beneath me. Might not the edge of the abyss be but a few yards off? And the idea of hanging over such a precipice, with who knows what below, was enough to make one look to the pebbles at his feet for comfort. Besides, I did not see how anybody with only hands for paddles, and without the help of a screw, could ever force his way through those leaden depths. It may pain some solemn critics to know that we very frequently broke the silence of the Dead Sea by shouts of merriment. But the fact must nevertheless be confessed,—though we are in some quarters given to understand, that whatever coloured garments a clergyman may wear in Palestine, he is always to write as one who travels in gown and bands. We enjoyed our bath exceedingly, felt much refreshed by it, and did not find

the pungent effect of the water on the skin peculiarly disagreeable.

We made no exploration of the shores. Our expedition had not an atom of science in it, here or elsewhere. We left such work, not without feelings of envy and admiration to explorers like the Duc de Luynes, who had started a day or two before, as we were told, in his steamer, and Mr. Tristram, who has since added a truly valuable and pleasing contribution to scientific books on Palestine.

My friend Mr. Reichardt of the Church Missionary Society, a resident for some years in Jerusalem, informed me that more than once he had visited a narrow tongue of land which runs into the Dead Sea, and had seen remains of ancient ruins upon it, which he was inclined to think belonged to a remote period.

We started now for Mar Saba. It was our original intention to have approached the Dead Sea from Mar Saba by the Ras-el-Feskah. But we were told that the district was rather disturbed, and that we might have some trouble in that route. This may have been an exaggeration, but our time was too limited to admit of unnecessary delays. There can be no doubt, however, that this is *the* point from which travellers should first behold the famous lake.

In riding along its shore before ascending the hills, we

were struck by the appearance of an island near its western end. I remarked how strange it was that no such island was noted in any map. "It must be mirage," we said. Yet surely no mirage could create an island so clear and well defined as that! But being on our guard against deception, we rejected the evidence of sense, and fell back on faith in the map. There was no island; but had there been one it could not have been more distinct.

The ride to Mar Saba was long and tedious. We were, I think, about eleven hours on horseback from the time we left Ain es Sultân until we reached the monastery. Travellers in the East will smile at this. But I did not smile, except grimly. I never was exposed, except once in the far West, to such oppressive heat, and we had no shelter of any kind. But I had fortunately a noble horse, which ambled along with a brave unfaltering step. I wish he could have known how much I pitied him, and how fully I appreciated the unselfish manner in which he did his work.

The scenery was altogether different from anything I had ever seen in my life or ever expect to see again. It realised all that can be imagined of a dry and parched land. We did not meet a human being. The silence was broken only, as I rode alone ahead, by the beat of the horse's hoofs and his strong breathing under the

sweltering heat. A glare of light streamed from earth and sky. We crossed dry plains, and ascended along the narrow path which zigzags up and up to the summit of the ridge. Everywhere desolation, as if the fire of heaven had scorched the rocks, and ten thousand furious torrents had denuded the valleys, and left great white mounds and peaks of clay and limestone, like a series of gigantic cones, along the hill-side. I have no distinct ideas of the journey beyond impressions of heat, glare, and dreariness, of bare rocks, narrow paths, deep ravines, valleys bare and wild as might be seen in the depths of an ocean along which icebergs had ploughed their way, tossing down hills of *débris*, to be moulded into fantastic forms by the roaring tides or whirlpools. More definite pictures my memory does not retain. That one day of life in the wilderness quite satisfied my fancy. But my memory does retain with more distinct clearness the satisfaction which I experienced when about sunset we went pacing along the edge of the Kidron gorge, and knew that Mar Saba was near.

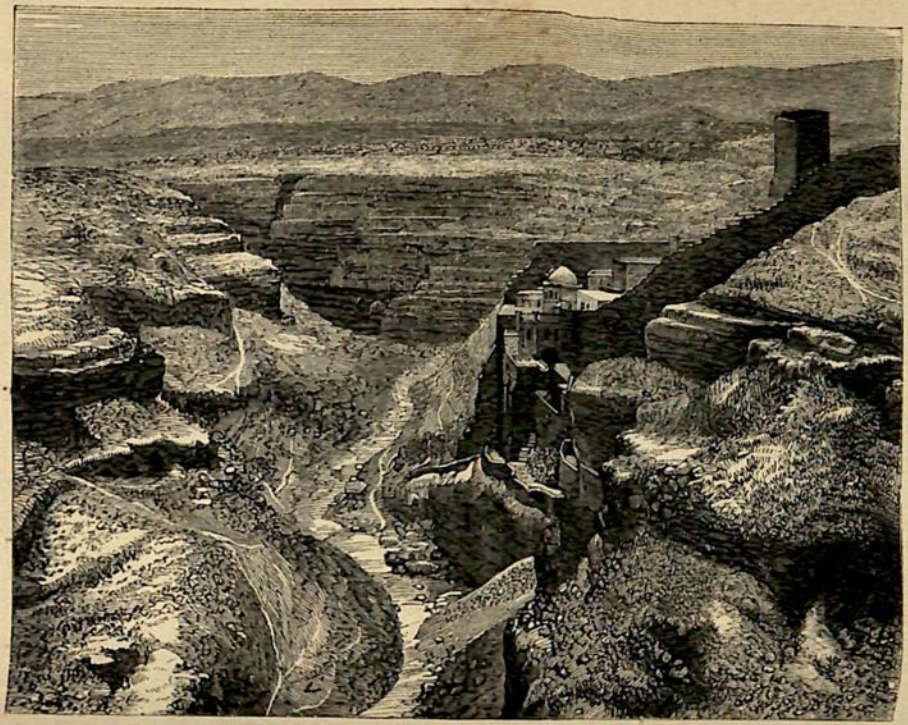
The approach to this famous old place is along one of the most picturesque paths in Palestine, or indeed in any country. The Kidron, with the help no doubt of earthquakes, has cut for itself during long ages a tortuous course several hundred feet deep. The rocks which rise from its bed in sheer precipices are so close

at the top that a one-arched bridge could span them. This deep ravine winds along like a huge railway cutting until it reaches the Monastery. That wonderful building, the hospice of pilgrims during many centuries, had its origin with the hermits—*tradition* says to the number of 15,000—who once sought refuge from persecution in this place of solitude and defence. The precipices are full of caves. These were enlarged, and fashioned, by the aid of walls closing up apertures and connecting jutting strata, into something like houses, or cells rather, by the anchorites. One abode communicated with another, a hundred feet below or above it, by narrow paths and tortuous holes, such as a fox might creep through with caution; and there they lived—God alone, who feeds the wild beasts of the desert, knows how!—on herbs and water, nourishing skeleton bodies containing strange minds, whose ideas belonged to a world of thought we know not of. And there they prayed, and starved themselves, and held a sort of communion with each other, until one cannot conceive of them as being other than monomaniacs possessed of oddest thoughts of God and man—of the world present and of the world to come—thoughts which now, I doubt not, seem stranger to themselves than to any on earth who survive them.

But how can I give an idea of the convent? Well, imagine a cell scooped out between the ledges of those

rocks, then several others near it, and then a cave enlarged into a chapel, and this chapel becoming the parish church of the wild glen, and being surrounded by other cells and houses built on this ledge of rock, and others below on another ledge reached by stairs, and others on story below story, and so down the face of the precipice, cells and chapels and houses being multiplied, until, from the ridge above to the stream below, a beehive has been formed, which is finally defended by high walls and two strong towers:—if you can fancy this hanging nest of bees and drones, you have an idea of Mar Saba. Its walls protect it from the incursions of the Bedouin. It is a haven of repose in the wilderness to every pilgrim. It can accommodate hundreds in its endless honeycombs; and is the *beau idéal* of a monastery, such as one reads about in tales of the Crusades and of the middle ages.

To enter it the traveller requires a letter of introduction from the ecclesiastical superior of the monks at Jerusalem. This we had obtained. A basket to receive it was lowered from one of the high towers by a dot representing a monk. This form is always gone through, and only when the letter is read, and not till then, is the gate opened to pilgrim or traveller. The poor shrivelled, dried-up, and half-starved monks were very civil, giving us coffee and wine in a comfortable



CONVENT OF MAR SABA.

refectory. Those who can converse with them say that they are very stupid and ignorant. Yet the place seemed to be a very paradise for study, with its repose, wild scenery, solitude, and antiquity. We saw of course all the sights—such as the skulls of 10,000 martyrs. Oh, for the brain and eyes, for a few minutes only, of one of these, to feel as he felt, and to see as he saw! The wish could not be gratified; and so the skulls taught us nothing which other skulls could not impart.

We encamped outside the monastery. It was a glorious night. When all were asleep, I left the tent to enjoy it, and also, let me add, to get some water to drink. The moonlight, the cool air, the deep shadows of the rocks, the silent towers shining in the moonlight, and the dreams of the past, made the hour delightful. But a prowling jackal, fox, or wolf—for there are many of each kind in the neighbourhood—induced me to return to my tent, and to forget Mar Saba for a time in sleep.

We had a short ride next day to Jerusalem up the Kedron Valley. This is beyond doubt the finest approach to the city, which from it has an elevation and citadel-look afforded by no other point of view;—the wall and buildings of the Haram Area rising above the Valley of Jehoshaphat.

XI.

A DAY'S RIDE SOUTH FROM JERUSALEM.

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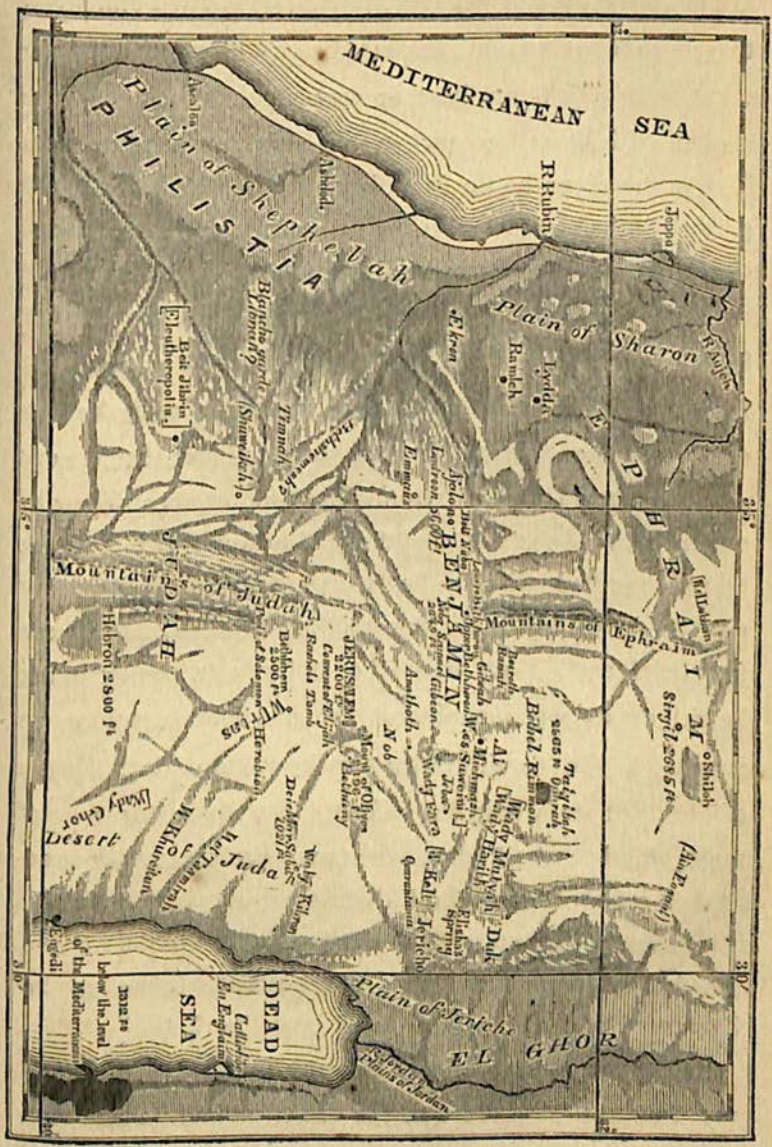
THERE is one remarkable peculiarity in the Bible, as a revelation of God's will to man—or rather of the many books which make up the one which we call the Bible,—that it is a record of historical events, extending over thousands of years, all of which occurred in many different places, but these principally situated within a very small territory. Accordingly there is hardly a hill or valley, stream or fountain, town or village in Palestine which has not been the home of some person, or the scene of some event known and familiar to the Church of Christ. Every spot is consecrated by holy associations. And so in journeying through the land, we almost every hour visit some

sacred locality. Thus, for example, in one day's ride south from Jerusalem, after leaving the city by the old Jewish tower at the gate of Jaffa, we cross the plain of Rephidim, pass close to the tomb of Rachel, visit Bethlehem, drink at the pools of Solomon, stand on the plain of Mamre and by the well of Abraham, wind among the vineyards of Eshcol, and end with Hebron.

This was our day's ride, and let me tell the reader something of what we saw in so brief a journey.

As to the general aspect of the country, it is beyond doubt the least picturesque in Palestine, and, apart from associations, does not possess any attractive feature. The hills which cluster over this upland plateau, are like straw beehives, or rather, let me say, like those boys' tops, which are made to spin by a string wound round them,—*peeries* as they are called in Scotland,—but turned upside down, the grooves for the string representing the encircling ledges of the limestone strata, and the peg a ruined tower on the summit. Imagine numbers of such hills placed side by side, with a narrow deep hollow between them filled with soil, their declivities a series of bare shelves of grey rock,—the rough path worming its way round about, up and down, with here and there broader intervals of flat land, and here and there the hillsides covered with shrubs and dwarf oaks,—and you will have some idea of the nature of the country between Jeru-



THE SOUTH OF PALESTINE.

salem and Hebron. In some places, as about Bethlehem, there are olive plantations, and signs of rapid improvement, with which my brother was much struck, as contrasted with what he saw on his visit seven years ago. To me the scene had a friendly and home look, for many parts of the stony road, with its break-down fences, reminded me of spots in a Highland parish, endeared by touching recollections of an early home; but the grander features of "the parish" could not be traced in Southern Palestine. Yet it is obvious, as has been remarked by every traveller, that an industrious population could very soon transform these barren hills into terraces rich with "corn and wine." Were these limestone ledges once more provided with walls, to prevent the soil being washed down into the valley by the rain floods, and were fresh soil carried up from the hollows, where it must lie fathoms deep, magnificent crops would very soon be produced. It is well known also how soon the moisture of the climate would be affected by the restoration of the orchards. And when we remember the small quantity of carbonaceous food that is required to maintain life in such a climate as Palestine, it is obvious that a population larger than that of Scotland, living as the Easterns do, could be supported in "The Land."

There was always one redeeming feature of the road, and that was "the glory of the grass." The flowers gave

colour and life to the path wherever they could grow. We came upon a large land tortoise crawling among them, the only specimen we met with in Palestine.

Rachel's Tomb was to me very touching. It was just where it should have been:—"They journeyed from Bethel, and there was but a little way to come to Ephrah. And Rachel died, and was buried in the way to Ephrah, which is Bethlehem." That place of burial is an undying witness to the oneness of our human hearts and of our domestic sorrows from the beginning of the world. It is this felt unity of our race in soul and spirit, in spite of some differences in the body, whether it be in the shape of the foot or of the skull, which strengthens our faith in the possibility of eternal fellowship among all kindreds and nations and tongues. To Rachel, with her dying breath naming her boy "the child of sorrow," every parent's heart will respond through all time.

We passed Bethlehem, but did not visit it until our return from Hebron. The Pools of Solomon * are interesting as being unquestionably grand old "waterworks," worthy of a highly civilised age, and such as all the Turks put together would never think of designing or executing now-a-days. And the water is not surpassed

* These pools are three in number. The largest is 580 feet in length and 236 feet in breadth. The smallest is 380 feet by 207 feet. The depth is from 25 to 50 feet.

by that of the great pool (Loch Katrine) which supplies Glasgow. The road during a part of the way is alongside the clay pipe which conveys the water to Bethlehem, as it did formerly to Jerusalem; and where there happens to be a break the fresh clear stream is seen gushing along as it did before the "works" were repaired by Pontius Pilate.

Below the Pools is the Valley of Urtas, which, being watered by them and other springs, looks like an emerald-green river, of about two miles in length, and from 10 to 300 yards in breadth, flowing between high banks of barren limestone hills, and winding round their jutting promontories. Here were once the Gardens of Solomon, and no doubt these hills, now so bare, were once clothed with the trees and plants about which he "spake." It was probably with reference to his labours in this spot that he said:—"I made me great works; I builded me houses; I planted me vineyards; I made me gardens and orchards, and I planted trees in them of all kind of fruit: I made me pools of water, to water therewith the wood that bringeth forth trees." And here an attempt is being made to introduce model gardens, where converted Jews may support themselves by their own industry, instead of trusting to the charity which they are necessarily thrown upon when "put out of the synagogue." In this enterprise my much-respected friend

Major C—— took a lively interest, as he does in all that is good, and became one of the proprietors, as did also Lady Dufferin and His Royal Highness Prince Alfred. We had coffee and conversation at Bethlehem with the present superintendent of these gardens, old Mr. Meshallum, who appears to be a sincere, good man. It is difficult to determine how far the benevolent experiment will succeed. It is not in a hopeful condition at present.

About two miles from Hebron we turned off to the left, to visit the ruins of an old church built by Constantine round the stump of a terebinth tree, which, according to tradition, was Abraham's oak, and consequently marked the spot where he pitched his tent on the plain of Mamre, or "of the oak." The old stump had become an object of superstition, and attracted crowds; so the Emperor Constantine, to counteract this, and to turn the spot to good account, built a great basilica around it. We found several feet of the walls of the church remaining, and we could easily trace the whole. Three tiers of stone remain at one side, some of the stones being upwards of 14 feet in length. "If Abraham," remarked one of the party, "had his tent near the oak, depend upon it he had a well also. Let us get inside the ruins and search." There we found—as no doubt other travellers have done, when they sought for it—a deep well, encased with stone, and having its edges deeply cut by the

ropes which were wont to hoist the water-buckets, or skins. I have not the slightest doubt that this was the true Mamre, and that it was close to this well that the wondrous interview between Abraham and those sent to destroy Sodom and Gomorrah, recorded in Genesis, took place. The scenery of the wady is dull and uninteresting in the extreme. But such an event as this sheds around it much of that holy light which more or less invests all Palestine. From the lower hills to the east, the smoke from the doomed cities could be easily seen, although the Dead Sea itself lies too low to be visible.

Hebron is entered by a road which winds between the walls that enclose the vineyards and orchards of Eshcol, the grapes of which are still famous.* It is snugly nestled amidst bare, tame, limestone hills, with numerous olive groves clothing their lower spurs and the valleys between them. There is no "hotel" in the city, but travellers who do not bring their tents can be accom-

* I have been informed by one who had, he said, made the experiment, that even now the best way of carrying a large cluster of the grapes of Eshcol is over a long pole, as was done by the "spies,"—not on account of their weight, but from the long tendrils on which they grow giving a cluster a greater length than is found in the same number of grapes grown elsewhere. As to the wine of Hebron and Bethlehem—of which we had supplies—not being intoxicating, that is absurd. If any one disposed to make the experiment can overcome the difficulty of *quality*, I have no doubt that a sufficient *quantity* will produce the same effect as other fermented liquors.

modated at the old Lazaretto, or, as we were, in a private dwelling. The houses are poverty-stricken. The Jewish inhabitants wear dressing-gowns with girdles, and sugar-loaf hats, curl their hair in tiny ringlets, and have soft white faces, giving one the impression of great effeminacy. Our host was a Jew. His house was situated and arranged in a way which at once suggested the idea of liability to attack, and of the necessity of providing for defence. We first passed from the street by what we call in Scotland a narrow *close*, which one broad shouldered man might almost have filled up with his own person; then along narrow tortuous windings, which could be easily defended by a few against many. Three or four steps led up to the narrow door of the house, which was situated in the deep recesses of alleys and back courts. The entrance-hall was a sleeping apartment with divans on each side; from it a second series of steps and another narrow door led to the kitchen. From this a stair ascended to the flat roof. On the left, a few steps led from the kitchen to a small room, round which we found our couches spread. The house thus possessed a succession of strongholds before the roof was reached, which was itself a citadel. The windows of our room had frames and shutters, but no glass, which afforded us at least ample ventilation. We provided of course our own

food. The night was tolerably cool, and so, in despite of the howlings of jackals without, and the attacks of insects common to Jew and Gentile within, we slept, as usual, profoundly.

There is certainly no town in Palestine which is so associated with early patriarchal history as Hebron. It has other associations no doubt, stirring and curious enough. For example, those connected with its early inhabitants, the strange race of giants who struck terror into the minds of the unbelieving spies; and with those men of faith, Caleb and Joshua; as well as with David,* who reigned here for seven years, during which he probably composed some of his immortal Psalms. But still the memories of the patriarchs predominate, as this was at once their home, if home they had anywhere, and their place of burial.

The oak, or terebinth tree, which is now pointed out as Abraham's oak, is indeed a noble tree, twenty-four feet in circumference, with stately branches sweeping ninety feet round its stem. But it was planted many a century after the patriarchs were gathered to their fathers.

The one spot connected with these ancient fathers

* The only memento here of David is the great pool—130 feet square by 50 deep—where he hanged the assassins of Ishbosheth (2 Sam. iv. 4-12). There is another pool as ancient, but not so large.

which is unquestionably authentic is the cave of Machpelah, now covered by the famous mosque. The Prince of Wales, accompanied by Dean Stanley and other members of his suite, were the first Christian travellers who were permitted to enter it for centuries. Since their visit, Mr. Fergusson has been allowed ready admission; and it is soon likely to be as accessible as the Holy Mosques of Jerusalem or Damascus, which until but as yesterday were also closed against all "infidels."

Both Dr. Stanley and Mr. Fergusson have given full and interesting details of the interior of this hitherto mysterious building. To their accounts I must refer my readers. I may state, however, for the information of those who have not access to their volumes, that there are no tombs to be seen in the mosque, but cenotaphs, or so-called tombs, on its floor, each a sort of monument to the famous patriarchs. But the cave itself in which their mummies are laid is beneath the floor of the Mosque, and, so far as is yet known, has no entrance except by a small hole in the floor, which opens into darkness. If there is another entrance, it has not been revealed by the Mohammedans even to the Prince of Wales. In that mysterious cave no doubt Abraham, Isaac, and Jacob lie. What a spot of matchless interest! There is no authentic tomb on earth like it. Nearly 4000 years ago, when earth was young and history just

beginning, here were buried persons with whose lives and characters we are still familiar, whose names God has deigned to associate with his own, as the "God of Abraham, and Isaac, and Jacob;" and whom Jesus has consecrated as guests at the great marriage supper of the Lamb. It is strange indeed for a Christian to be on the spot where that one lies in whose seed all the families of earth have been blessed, and who is the father of all who believe!

This is the only spot on earth which attracts to it all who possess the one creed, "I believe in God." The "Holy Sepulchre" in Jerusalem separates Moslem, Jew, and Christian: here they assemble together. The Moslem guards this place as dear and holy. The Jew from every land draws near to it with reverence and love, and his kisses have left an impress on its stones. Christians of every kindred, and tongue, and creed, visit the spot with a reverence equally affectionate. And who lies here? A great king or conqueror? a man famous for his genius or his learning? No; but an old shepherd who pitched his tent 4000 years ago among these hills, a stranger and a pilgrim in the land, and who was known only as *el-Khalil*, "The Friend." By that blessed name, Abraham was known while he lived; by that name he is remembered where he lies buried; and by that name the city is called after him. And it is when all

men through faith become with him Friends of God, that all shall be blessed along with "faithful Abraham." Praise be to God for such an immortality as this, whether possessed by us on earth or in heaven, through faith and love in Christ towards God, whose glory may be concealed from the wise and prudent, but is revealed to babes!

But we must now visit Bethlehem, where He was born in the flesh who was yet before Abraham, whose day Abraham saw afar off and was glad, and in whom "the promise" was fulfilled to Abraham's spiritual seed, more numerous verily than the stars of heaven!

Of all the places in Southern Palestine associated with Scripture history, Bethlehem is on the whole the most picturesque. The three convents attached to the Church of the Nativity, which crown the summit and the ridge on which the village is built, wear the massive and dignified look of an old mediæval fortress. The terraces, which, like gigantic stairs, descend to the lower valleys and the small alluvial plains and cornfields, have a fine bold sweep, and are rich in olives and fruit trees, the shade and verdure of which relieve the eye from the dazzling glare of the white limestone rocks and soil. The hills around are higher, and more varied than those which border the upper plateau, the cone of Jebel

Fureidis breaking their otherwise tame outline, and the mountain ridge of Moab rising with its noble wall against the eastern horizon.

The "sacred localities" of Bethlehem are all seen under one roof. One can here pace along the oldest existing Christian church in the world. It was repaired by King Edward IV. of England; Baldwin was crowned in it; and it was built centuries before by the mother of the first Christian emperor. It is a noble structure, though it has but scanty ecclesiastical furnishings. In spite, therefore, of its roof of English oak, and its grand rows of marble pillars, it looks cold, bare, and uncared for. It is possessed in common by the Greeks, Latins, and Armenians, whose chapels occupy the choir and transepts only, and whose respective convents, like competing places of business, are attached to its walls. The decayed state of its unoccupied nave tempts one to ask whether catholic love really calls forth the same amount of self-sacrifice for the building and repair of churches, not to speak of other "religious" works, as sectarian zeal does.

Beneath this old church, and reached by a number of steps cut out of the living rock, is the cave of the Nativity. Here, surrounded by the usual amount of tinsel and tawdry ornament, lamps, altars, and incense, is a hollow recess, in which it is alleged the Saviour

was born. It is possible that this tradition, which can unquestionably be traced to a very early period, probably the second century, is authentic. The fact of cattle being kept in caves or grottoes, affording easy access and excellent shelter, is sufficiently common even now in Palestine, to warrant us in admitting that this cave may have been used as a stable. But in spite of all probabilities in its favour, I could not associate the Incarnation and Nativity with what the eye saw here. The spectacle did not help my faith, or even harmonise with it, as did those scenes in nature, associated with the life of Jesus, which the priest has not yet attempted to improve. Bethlehem itself—its lovely hills, its very air, with the blue sky over all, impressed me infinitely more.

Close to the sacred cave is an historical spot of unquestioned authenticity. It is the small cell where Jerome lived and died, fourteen centuries ago, and where he composed the Vulgate, at least his version of it, and wrote treatises and letters enough to compete, in number, with those of John Calvin, or any other of those marvellous men who managed to attend to the affairs of Christendom, and at the same time to write whole libraries. The places in which such men lived give life to history. Their "local habitation" restores their personality, and gives substance to what might otherwise

become a mere name. I know not what Jerome would think of many of our modern controversies, in which his authority is claimed by each of the contending parties; but it is a comfort to believe that when he lived he must have had fellowship with all who like himself delighted to realise the presence of Jesus, and to worship Him as God manifest in the flesh. And how much more must this be the case since He has gone to glory.

But it is not, of course, what one *sees* in Bethlehem which imparts to it such overwhelming interest. It is the one fact of all facts, the secret of the world's existence and of its whole history,—the Incarnation. Other events indeed are necessarily suggested while sitting under the shade of its old olives, gazing in silent meditation on the surrounding landscape. From these mountains of Moab came Ruth and Naomi. One of those fields stretching like a green landing-place at the foot of the broad stairs of cultivated terraces, was the scene of that exquisite idyll of Ruth gleaning "amidst the alien corn," which sanctifies common life, shedding a glory over every field of reapers, like that which rests over the lilies of the field, and is greater far than any which Solomon ever knew. To those far-off hills, too, David sent his wives for safety, just as a Highland chief in similar circumstances would have sent his wife in the

days of the clans, to relations "far removed" it might be, yet strong in the ties of blood. David himself, first as the shepherd boy, and then as the brave chief, seemed again

> "To walk in glory and in joy,
> Following his *sheep* along the mountain side,"

himself guided by the Lord his Shepherd. And it must have been the water of that old well, which still sends forth its living stream, that David longed to drink of. But these and other memories are lost in the story of David's Son, born in Bethlehem, "the least of the thousands of Judah."

The imagination gets bewildered in attempting to realise the facts connected with the Incarnation. They fill the heavens above and the earth below with their glory. We instinctively look up to the sky and then to the hills, and dream of the night when the Angel of the Lord announced the birth of Jesus to the humble shepherds somewhere hereabout. On that ridge? on those knolls? in that mountain recess? In vain we ask! What we do know is, that as the Aurora flashes across the midnight of the North, so there once gleamed a heavenly host athwart this quiet sky, and filled it with the *Gloria in excelsis* which gives the only true promise of the world's redemption from evil, and restoration to

God's immortal kingdom of righteousness, peace, and joy. We can never weary of the simple and sublime narrative :—"And there were in the same country shepherds abiding in the field, keeping watch over their flock by night. And, lo, the angel of the Lord came upon them, and the glory of the Lord shone round about them : and they were sore afraid. And the angel said unto them, Fear not : for, behold, I bring you good tidings of great joy, which shall be to all people. For unto you is born this day in the city of David a Saviour, which is Christ the Lord. And this shall be a sign unto you ; ye shall find the babe wrapped in swaddling-clothes, lying in a manger. And suddenly there was with the angel a multitude of the heavenly host praising God, and saying, Glory to God in the highest, and on earth peace, good-will toward men. And it came to pass, as the angels were gone away from them into heaven, the shepherds said one to another, Let us now go even unto Bethlehem, and see this thing which is come to pass, which the Lord hath made known unto us."

As we read of these things we ask with surprise, Did they actually happen here? Is this Bethlehem?

Such questionings lead me to notice a thought which constantly forced itself upon me in Palestine. It was as to the altered impression which I would receive from

the landscape through my rejection of the supernatural facts associated with it in Scripture history. Palestine, as the reader knows, is full of historical memories, which are not confined to any one spot, as for example to the capital, nor to one or two well-known or more favoured localities, but are scattered all over the land. Almost every town and village, every hill and stream, recalls some Bible narrative of persons or events. And a great portion of these, to us the most momentous and important, belongs to the region of the supernatural, or the miraculous. For verily Heaven lay about the infancy of the Church of God, which was cradled and nursed in this Holy Land. Angels ministered to its wants, guided its tottering steps, defended it from every foe, revealed to it visions of its future glory, and sang to it songs of praise. Everywhere its tutors and governors had power given them to do works of wonder in the cause of truth and mercy.

Take away this supernatural element from Palestine, reduce everything to the mere patent facts of ordinary life, and it seems to me like separating the glory of the illumined atmosphere and sky from the earth; or like eliminating from man all that belongs to him as an immortal being made after God's image, with all the manifold mysteries which that creation involves, and reducing him, by the aid of chemistry, into the carbon, silica, and other constituents which compose his material being, so

that he may be seen and handled, and his existence reconciled to science.

When I was in Greece, and gazed on that bright and glorious land from the Acropolis of Athens, I felt there was no mingling of the natural with the supernatural. That land of philosophy and poesy had its myths, no doubt, and its beautiful romantic dreams. Its rivers, valleys, and mountains are resplendent with the creations of the mind. These, like clouds illumined by the sun, brood over spots made for ever famous by heroic deeds, or by the teaching of great thinkers. But there is no difficulty felt in separating the prose from the poetry. This can be done without violence to the religious convictions of the present, or to the traditions of the past. The great men of old who created the myths, or transferred them from the religious faith of the peasant into the poems or dramas which make them immortal, would be the first to smile at our credulity if we seriously received their creations as facts. And the severest historical criticism would only bring our convictions into harmony with theirs. But it is different with Palestine. Its history and the supernatural are indissolubly bound together. He who would separate them, and deny the one as an element of the other, would be himself denied by prophets, apostles, yea by Jesus Christ. Greece without the supernatural remains the same to every man

of learning and taste. Palestine without the supernatural fades into the light of common day, and from being a holy land, becomes a body of death to the whole Christian Church.

Another thought which forced itself upon me is the remarkable frequency with which the attempt to separate the natural from the supernatural would have to be made in Palestine. It would have to be repeated by the traveller almost every hour, and in every spot. He would have, for example, to strip Bethlehem of the whole story of the angels with their message and song. In Bethany it would be the same. The raising of Lazarus and the ascension of Christ would have to vanish beneath the rational magic wand. And as for Jerusalem, he would have to construct anew its whole history, including all the events in the life of Jesus—a task requiring at least a strong imagination and much patience. And so it would be throughout the whole land until he reached Tiberias, where the process would have to be repeated on its waves, its shores, and in every ruined town which once rang with the praises of the great Healer and Restorer. Well, suppose all this done, and the supernatural wholly swept from off the landscape, is there nothing miraculous left behind? Is there no wonder in "a holy land" being so full of falsehoods, myths, and superstitions, albeit they are the creation of simple loving

hearts who did not intend to deceive, but had not sufficient culture to see that they were false? Is there no wonder in the fact that the holiest love of truth, and the greatest horror of falsehood in every shape and form, have been the invariable characteristics of those who believed in the Bible, and in the Christ of the Gospels, with all He is recorded to have said and done? Is there no wonder in men from all lands—some of them occupying "the foremost ranks of time"—coming to worship in "this mountain," still believing those supernatural events, and blessing God for them? Is there no wonder in the fact that miraculous events ended with Christ and His Apostles, and that since their day a debased, untruthful, and superstitious people have given birth to no marvels of any kind?

It is Vinet, I think, who has somewhere remarked that Christianity has a marvellous resurrective life, for though often slain and buried by its enemies, it ever rises again to live in human hearts. A remarkable contrast is suggested at Bethlehem between the strength of man and "the weakness of God." The first attempt to destroy Christianity in the person of Christ was here made by King Herod, surnamed the Great. He was the type of irresistible human power, while the young child was the type of unresisting human weakness. But now Herod lies on the summit of Jebel Fureidis, or the Frank

Mountain, which, like a huge monumental tumulus, towers above Bethlehem as if raised "in memoriam" of the massacre of the innocents; while the Child!—but who can describe what He has since become on earth and in heaven! Thus will all the enemies of Christ be one day put under His feet.*

Before bidding farewell to Bethlehem and its sacred associations, I may describe a commonplace incident which befel us on our way from Hebron, as illustrative of the supposed danger to which travellers are subjected.

Mr. M——, one of Colonel M——'s party, was riding along with me. We were far in the rear of the cavalcade, which, by the way, included our brave guard. Having abundance of time, we were leisurely chatting, and our steeds as leisurely walking, when all at once we saw six Arab-looking horsemen galloping towards us. They suddenly dismounted, and forthwith began to load their long guns. "Hollo! what does this mean!" one of us exclaimed. Various suggestions were hazarded,

* A friend has directed my attention to the following allusion by Macrobius (a writer of the early part of the fifth century) to Herod—

"Cum audisset inter pueros quos in Syria Herodes Rex Judæorum, intra bimatum, jussit interfici, filium quoque ejus occisum: ait 'melius est Herodis porcum esse quam filium.'"

"When (Augustus) had heard that among the children whom Herod king of the Jews ordered to be put to death in Syria, under two years old, his own son too had perished, he said, 'It is better to be Herod's pig than his son.'"—'Saturnalia,' lib. ii. chap. iv.

the most unpleasant, but most probable, being that an attack was about to be made on our baggage, which was at this time behind us, and out of sight. At once the unknown horsemen charged right down upon us, we of course disdaining to show any signs of fear or flight, but gallantly preparing our pistols, notwithstanding our being minus both powder and shot. Two of the troopers dismounted and demanded *backsheesh* from me. I replied by shaking my head, and begging, with a look of poverty and an outstretched hand, the same favour from them. Their next demand was for powder—*barūd*, I think was the word. In the mean time I had wound up my musical snuff-box, and invited the two highwaymen, as I understood them, to receive more peaceful ideas by permitting me to lay the box on their heads. The usual results followed. There were the delighted expressions of "Tayēeb! tayēeb!"—with the invariable exhibition of beautiful ivory teeth, framed in a most pleasant smile. And so we were allowed to depart in peace. We afterwards learned that the fierce robbers who thus spared our purses and our lives were—a detachment of Turkish police! So much for the fears and hairbreadth escapes of travellers.

We returned from Bethlehem to Jerusalem. Is not that one day's ride from Hebron to Jerusalem, *viâ* Bethlehem, enough to reward any traveller from England

to Palestine, even though he should not take another? And yet it is quite possible to enjoy it, "wind and weather permitting," in a fortnight after leaving London!*

* That is by taking the Italian and Adriatic route, and finding a steamer for Jaffa, on arriving at Alexandria.

XII.

JERUSALEM TO SAMARIA.

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ONE other night in Jerusalem, and then we resumed our tent-life, journeying northward.

Leaving Jerusalem by the Damascus Gate, we soon reached the low ridge of Scopus, whence we turned our horses' heads to take a last view of "the city of the Great King." We gazed on the now familiar domes and minarets, the gentle swell of the Mount of Olives rising above them like the roll of a great sea wave. We felt as if taking our last look of a dead parent. It was difficult to tear ourselves away, feeling that we should, in all probability, see the beloved object no more. Yet there came undefined and impalpable thoughts of a resurrection—gleams of a light beyond the

grave—dim visions of a new Jerusalem better than the old—thoughts, not shaped into beliefs, of our living to see the land and its city yet connected with some evolution in the future history of the Church. But we had to depart. So at last, with one intense gaze which I doubt not ended in the case of us all in heartfelt thanksgiving for having been permitted to see the city whose "very dust is dear," we resumed our journey, to visit other scenes linked with the holy men of old and the holy Son of God.

The road to the north has little interest for the eye, until we get into the mountains of Ephraim. It runs along the flat watershed of the country, the valleys descending from it towards the Jordan on the east, and the maritime plain on the west. We passed Neby Samwil on the left, and Gibeah of Saul (Tel-el-ful) on the right. We ascended this latter hill, or rather huge mound, which has another mound so near that a conversation can be held between persons on their respective summits,—both hills no doubt having been included in the old city. We thought of the terrible story of the wayfarer who, journeying to Mount Ephraim, sought refuge here for the night—a story which reveals the night side of social life during an anarchical period of Jewish history, and is one of those inarticulate cries out of the depths for a king and deliverer from evil. We

thought of Samuel and Saul, of David and Jonathan, with the events which took place here and in the neighbouring valleys, including the battle of Michmash, three miles off, whose din reached the anxious watchers on this citadel.

We passed on to Bireh, or Beeroth, where, according to tradition, the parents of Jesus first missed their boy, as the small caravan gathered together for rest. They had up till then assumed that He was "among kinsfolk and acquaintance,"—a fact which reveals how like his early social life was to our own. We also noticed a peaked hill with a village on its summit, towering above a low range. It is the Orphah, or Ephraim, to which Jesus retired after the raising of Lazarus.

We reached Bethel, but in that illustrious spot saw nothing with the outer eye save stones of confusion and emptiness. Huge limestone blocks washed white with the rains, without any appearance of verdure among them, cover the hill-tops. Yet here, probably where the wretched cluster of huts now stands, with the ruined tower rising among them, was once the Sanctuary of God. Here the Patriarchs erected the earliest altars dedicated to His worship. Here, too, was the seat of old idolatries, where the "golden calves" of Egypt were set up in opposition to the temple of Jerusalem, whose summit could have been seen from the spot, as the dome

of the Mosque of Omar can be seen now. Here was that memorable vision afforded to Jacob, which has been realised by the union of earth and heaven, men and angels, in the person of the Son of Man and the Son of God. I felt, as on former occasions, in no way disappointed with the present commonplace look of the scene of these glorious spiritual revelations. To me it shed a light of hope and joy into the abodes of poverty, glorifying humanity in the commonest outward forms, and as existing in the commonest places. "The stones of Venice" never inspired me with such hope for man, as the stones of Bethel, which had formed the pillow of Jacob.

Soon after passing Bethel we entered the mountains of Ephraim. The whole character of the landscape suddenly changed. For the first time on our journey there was scenery worth looking at for its own sake. The hills assumed a bolder and more commanding form. There was more elbow room, so to speak, among them. There were high peaked hills, crowned with towers or ruins, and extensive groves of figs and olives; while a range of precipitous rocks with excavated tombs ran along a portion of our route. The road, however, was the worst we had yet seen, if indeed the bed of a torrent can be called a road. It was most difficult for our horses to keep their footing, as they cautiously felt their

way through loose stones, and over muddy holes concealed by the stream. The pass through which we rode was one which few armies would attempt to force, if bravely defended. It terminated to the north in a green flat spot beneath a low wall of rocks, called, with great propriety, "the Robbers' Fountain," or Ain-el-Hamareyeh, and which all travellers avoid after sunset. One often wonders where the insolent, club-carrying, and backsheesh-asking rascals come from. For it is comparatively rare to see any villages along the road, which apparently leads for miles through solitude. But just as flies or vultures suddenly gather to any spot where food awaits them, so these Fellaheen, with dirty shirts, brown faces, keen eyes, white teeth, bare legs, and big shoes, creep from behind rocks, or descend hill paths, armed with club or gun, as if they lived in dens or caves of the earth. Needy scoundrels with bad consciences and good clubs or long guns can do much mischief during a single night, in districts innocent of both magistrates and detectives. So we left the Robbers' Fountain with that prudence which is at once moral and agreeable, and reached our tents on the high grounds of Sinjil, after an easy and pleasant ride of seven or eight hours. The traveller, provided his horse be good, and himself able and willing, can reach Nablous in one day from Jerusalem. But wishing to take things quietly, and not as if

carrying the mail, we broke the journey by encamping here.

As usual after ablutions and dinner, we rejoiced in the stars, for the weather was splendid; and we put a stop for a time to the incessant jabber of the Arabs, who came in crowds from the neighbouring village, by indulging them with music from our inexhaustible box, instead of *backsheesh* from our far from inexhaustible purse.

Early next day, we sighted Shiloh to the east, but did not ride up to it, though it was only half an hour off our route. There is nothing to see at this famous spot, although one is glad to pause and gaze upon it from the distance. Its situation is well *pronounced* as seen from the path we travelled. It is a round low hill at the end of a plain, and leaning on a more elevated range above it. There are no remains of any importance. All around is grey, bare, and barren. But it is interesting to see the place where that man of highest and purest character, Samuel, ministered as a boy. His was a childhood which has been blessed to the comfort of many a parent, as revealing both God's fatherhood as a teacher of babes, and the meek obedience which even a simple-hearted child may possess, and which (thank God) may be kept until old age! Here too ministered old Eli who, notwithstanding his piety and possession of a high mood of mind which made him tremble for the ark of God, is an

everlasting warning to parents, against the soft-hearted selfishness which will not restrain a self-indulgent family. During many a long year the tribes went up to the ark at Shiloh. But now all is silence, desolation, and barrenness, with nothing to be seen, yet much to be learned and remembered.

As we advanced on our journey, the valleys expanded into broader plains, and the paths became better; the whole country of Ephraim evidencing a fertility and agricultural richness which cannot be found in the rocky fastnesses of Palestine. One saw, from the nature of the country, how there must have been a strong temptation on the part of Ephraim to lean on his own arm of flesh, and to say, "I am rich and increased in goods, and have need of nothing;" and also to seek to make himself the head of the nation, and to prefer Samaria to Jerusalem, —just as England would not brook to have Edinburgh for its capital.

The richest and most magnificent expanse of cultivated soil we saw on this journey was the plain of Mukhra, which extends for about seven miles. It suddenly burst on our view from the summit of a high ridge over which our road passed. The promontories of Gerizim and Ebal plunge their rocky headlands into it from the west, while a range of low hills separates it from the descent towards the Jordan on the east. We skirted this plain,

until we sat down under the shadow of Gerizim, to read and to meditate, as pilgrims have done for centuries, at Jacob's Well.

There has never been a doubt entertained by the most sceptical or critical traveller regarding the identity of this well. Beyond all question it is the one at which our Saviour rested as He journeyed along the route which travellers generally follow from Jerusalem to Galilee. Every feature of the landscape starts into life as we read the narrative of His memorable conversation with the woman of Samaria:—the plain of cornfields which were then as now whitening to the harvest; the mountain rising above, on which the Samaritan temple was built; the neighbouring town of Shechem; the Samaritans worshipping, as they still do, towards "this mountain," and there only;—all are evidence of its truth, apart from the common and unbroken tradition.

The well is not what we understand by that name. It is not a spring of water bubbling up from the earth, nor is it reached by an excavation. It is a shaft cut in the living rock, about nine feet in diameter, and now upwards of seventy feet deep. As an immense quantity of rubbish has fallen into it, the original depth must have been much greater, probably twice what it is now. It was therefore intended by its first engineer as a reservoir, rather than as a means of reaching a spring. Then

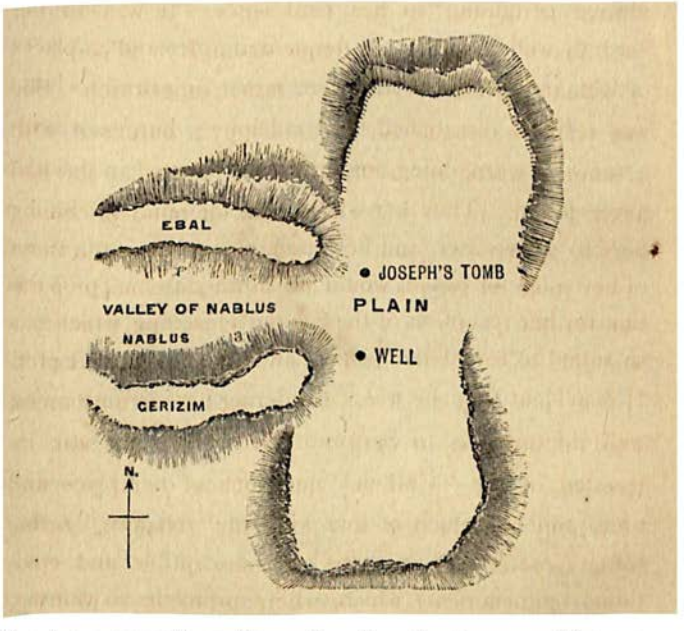
again, if any wall, as some suppose, once surrounded its mouth, on which the traveller could rest, it is now gone. The mouth is funnel shaped, and its sides are formed by the rubbish of old buildings, a church having once been erected over it. But we can descend this funnel, and enter a cave, as it were, a few feet below the surface, which is the remains of a small dome that once covered the mouth. Descending a few feet we perceive in the floor an aperture partly covered by a flat stone, and leaving a sufficient space through which we can look into darkness. We sent a plumb-line down into the water—with which the well certainly seemed to be abundantly supplied at the time of our visit.

Many have been puzzled to account for Jacob's having dug such a well here, when the whole valley of Shechem, only a quarter of an hour's walk off, is more musical with streams than any other in Palestine. But *some one* dug the well,—and who more likely than Jacob, not only to have on his own property what was in his time more valuable than a private coal mine would be to us; but also for the moral purpose of keeping his family and dependants as separate as possible from the depraved Shechemites?

Why the woman of Samaria should have come here to draw water, so far away from the valley and its many springs, is a question which may be more difficult to

answer. I cannot think it could have been because of the superior quality of the water, for no cistern could afford a purer, cooler, or better quality than that which gushes everywhere along the Valley of Nablous. It seems to me that her motive was a superstitious one—a motive pertaining to her conscience. It was to her "a holy well," such as are frequented in Ireland as places of Roman Catholic devotion, or rather superstition. She was restless, dissatisfied, and unhappy; burdened with a sense of wrongdoing, and thirsting after what she had never found. Thus her whole state of mind in coming here to draw water, and her attempt to assuage the thirst of her spirit for peace, would be an unconscious preparation for her reception of the Saviour's teaching, which was so suited to reveal her plague, and also to heal her of it. It is evident that she was, considering her circumstances, well informed as to Scripture facts; that she was interested in the "Church" questions of her place and time, and had much of that kind of "religious" *feeling* (often possessed by persons of a susceptible and emotional temperament) which, where principle is wanting, gives birth at once to a sensuous superstition and a sensuous life. But before evil habits have "petrified the feelings," there is a stage at which such persons are more easily impressed than others with less heart, though perhaps with more "respectability."

How long will it be, we ask with eager longing, ere clergy and people shall truly possess the spirit expressed in these words?—"Jesus saith unto her, Woman, believe me, the hour cometh, when ye shall neither in this mountain, nor yet at Jerusalem, worship the Father. . .



The hour cometh, and now is, when the true worshippers shall worship the Father in spirit and in truth: for the Father seeketh such to worship him. God is a spirit: and they that worship him must worship him in spirit and in truth."

This well is indeed a holy spot. One is glad that the contending ecclesiastical parties in the land have built their churches on places which have little historical value, and that a merciful Providence has preserved untouched, and open to the eye of heaven, such spots as that on the Mount of Olives "over against the Temple," and, above all, Jacob's Well. It is now said, however, that the Greek Church have purchased it, as the site of a church, for 70,000 piastres. Universal Christendom, to which it belongs, should protest against such "pious" profanation.

The two parallel ridges of Mount Gerizim and Ebal, as shown in the small map (p. 361), abruptly terminate with their rounded masses in the dead flat plain. The Valley of Nablous leads to the plain as a narrow strait to an inland sea. A mile and a-half up this valley lies the town, nestled amidst an exuberance of foliage—vines, figs, pomegranates, oranges, and every fruitful tree, all growing beside inexhaustible streams of living water. Nothing in Palestine surpasses the picturesqueness of this spot when looked at from any of the surrounding heights. Travellers have no doubt seen places elsewhere of greater beauty. But here, in the midst of the white, bare, hot hills and plains, it stands alone in its glory of fruit and verdure, of running brooks and singing birds. Should any one penetrate these groves, however, he would find little of the art which helps Nature to produce

that ideal of the beautiful after which she struggles. The grass grows wild, the ground is rough, while tangled shrubs and branches mingle with the trees as in a long-neglected garden.

Nablous, or Shechem, is to the Christian traveller a *standpoint* for meditation, just as Hebron, Bethlehem, Nazareth, and Tiberias are.

It was the earliest seat of the worship of the living God of which we have received any authentic information. To this plain of Moreh, or "the oak," Abraham first came from Padan-aram, crossing the Jordan to the east, and ascending directly from it. At the head of the wady up which he must have travelled, is a village now called Salem, or Salim, about two miles from Jacob's Well. It has been conjectured, with a high degree of probability, that this, and not Jerusalem (which until centuries afterwards—in David's time—had no importance attached to it, and is but once in Scripture called Salem), was the place where Melchizedek dwelt as the priest of the most high God, and where he met and blessed Abraham. If so, this would account for the mention of "the oak," as being already known as the place where the worship of the true God had been established. It has moreover been maintained, with, to me, convincing argument, by Dr. Stanley, supported by Mr. Mills, that Mount Gerizim (on which Melchizedek may also have worshipped) was

the scene of Abraham's intended sacrifice of Isaac. It suits the geography of the country much better than Jerusalem. Abraham could hardly have taken three days in going from Beersheba to Jerusalem, as the whole distance is but thirty-six miles. Besides, there is no point in the journey, taking any ordinary route, from which he could have seen the present Temple area, or even the site of Jerusalem, "afar off." But if he came to Gerizim from the same starting-point, his journey would have been about sixty miles, which is nothing for an Arab traveller to accomplish in three days, on the most common ass, more especially if he rose "very early in the morning" of the first day. If, moreover, Abraham journeyed, as no doubt he did, along the maritime plain, Gerizim is so situated that it must have been seen "afar off" on the morning of the third day.*

If to these associations connected with Shechem we add another, that it was the residence of Jacob, who followed the steps of his grandfather,—bought a parcel of ground, and dug a well,—we at once see the reason why the place was known to Moses and the Israelites in

* The argument against this view, from the name "Moriah" being given to the site of the Temple, has no force, as it might have been bestowed because of David's "vision." "Solomon began to build the house of the Lord in the mount of *Moriah* (*i.e.* "the appearance of the Lord") where He *appeared* unto David his father."

Egypt as the only spot in Canaan solemnly consecrated from the earliest patriarchal times to the worship of God. It was for this reason, no doubt, that Moses commanded the children of Israel to assemble at Shechem. And we read accordingly that Joshua assembled them, when "all Israel, and their elders, and officers, and their judges, stood on this side the ark and on that side before the priests the Levites, which bare the ark of the covenant of the Lord, as well the stranger, as he that was born among them; half of them over against mount Gerizim, and half of them over against mount Ebal; as Moses the servant of the Lord had commanded before, that they should bless the people of Israel. And afterward he read all the words of the law, the blessings and cursings, according to all that is written in the book of the law. There was not a word of all that Moses commanded, which Joshua read not before all the congregation of Israel, with the women, and the little ones, and the strangers that were conversant among them." It is not here said, as some imagine, that the summit of each mountain was occupied by the half of the great assembly. But they were "half of them set over against mount Gerizim, and half of them over against mount Ebal." Nor is it the case that the words if read from the sides of the mountains would have been inaudible to the assembled people: for the experiment was actually made by

Mr. Mills and a friend, who occupied places on the opposite hills, and read aloud the blessings and the curses, each being distinctly heard by the other.*

Such an assembly as this of the united Church of God was never before witnessed, unless perhaps at Shiloh, when the tabernacle was set up; nor since then, unless when Christ's Church met on the day of Pentecost.

It was here, too, that another event took place full of sacred and dramatic interest—the burial of Joseph. Nearly five hundred years before the assembling of the people by Joshua, Joseph, as a young shepherd lad, passed through this plain in search of his brethren. What a life was his! But his influence did not end with his death. Though dead he was yet a silent but most impressive witness to the people of faith in God and in His promises. How strange a sight was that body embalmed for centuries, carried through the wilderness for forty years with the ark of God, and finally buried by that vast assemblage, each one a blood relation, in the land of promise, and in the very field purchased by his father! What memories must have gathered round his grave! How undying is the influence of faith, hope, and love! This is what we are told of that remarkable funeral: "And the bones of Joseph, which the children of Israel brought up out of Egypt, buried they in Shechem,

* Mills' 'Modern Samaritans,' p. 59.

in a parcel of ground which Jacob bought of the sons of Hamor the father of Shechem for an hundred pieces of silver: and it became the inheritance of the children of Joseph."

There is no reason to doubt that the tomb shown is really Joseph's. It remains, like that of his ancestors at Hebron, to witness again, it may be, in later ages more even than now, to the truth of Bible history.

But we must not forget the modern Samaritans, whose existence invests Nablous with great interest. We pause and wonder as we realise the fact of a community, consisting of only about 150 souls, or forty families, living for nearly 3000 years separate from all other races on earth, with their own Pentateuch, ritual, sacrifices, and worship,* and surviving all the changes and revolutions of Palestine and of the world. Here they are still, worshipping towards Mount Gerizim, having no fellowship with the Jews, keeping all the great festivals prescribed by Moses, and eating their Passover "on this mountain," the oldest spot for the worship of Jehovah on the face of the earth! Such a fact stands alone. This undying dogmatism puzzles historians; this race, so noble-looking, yet marrying only in their own small community, puzzles ethnographers, and creates in all feelings of wonder such as one might experience if in some distant land he came

* See Appendix No. V.

upon a breed of Mammoths, or Pterodactyles, which everywhere else were known only as fossils. To meet them here especially, at Jacob's Well, and under the same delusions as when Christ first preached to them and converted many of them, but adds to the wonder of a spectacle familiar to every traveller in Palestine.

We ascended Gerizim. It is a rather tough bit of climbing. I assigned this alpine occupation to my horse, and yet suffered sufficiently, after a day's ride, to sympathise with his patient but painful labours. There is much to interest one on the summit:—the scattered ruins; the massive remains of what some allege to have been the old Samaritan Temple, but what others say, with I think greater probability, was a Roman fort. Then there is the unquestionable site of an old place of sacrifice; and the more questionable twelve stones which Joshua brought from the Jordan, but which it is now difficult even to number or to distinguish from the underlying strata. There is also the trough where the paschal lamb is yet roasted, some of whose burnt bones I gathered. And there is the magnificent view over the plain across the valley of the Jordan eastward to the mountains beyond, and westward to the blue Mediterranean.

We of course visited the famous Samaritan synagogue. Our approach to it seemed to us at the time to be by an

exceptional way, though it is possibly the ordinary road to this ancient sanctuary. I cannot recall each turn and winding; but I have a confused impression of an endless succession of narrow lanes, low vaulted passages, and almost pitch-dark cavernous tunnels, through which we were led, until we reached a steep narrow stair leading to the roof of a house, from which we passed along to a court with an orange-tree growing in it, and thence into the small vaulted synagogue, the only place of worship of this ancient Church in the whole world. In all this we recognised precautions against sudden attacks, such as we had noticed in entering our lodgings at Hebron.

The Samaritans professed to show us their old and famous copy of the Pentateuch. This we knew was a pious fraud, but we did not take the trouble to contradict them, as a sight of the real one can only be obtained with great difficulty, and would have simply gratified a vain curiosity in us. The old roll is of very high, but as yet unknown antiquity. Its possessors allege that it was written by the great-grandson of Aaron.

The morning was glorious when we rode out of Nablous. A luxurious atmosphere hung over the gardens, and subdued the sharp statuesque lines of the hills. A Turkish regiment, with strings of camels, was winding through the valley,—their band playing its wild music, and giving to the whole scene a true touch of Eastern

life and barbaric power. We were told that they were going away to keep in order some restless and tax-hating tribes to the south of Hebron.

The ride from Nablous to Samaria is along a good bridle-path, with pleasant scenery all the way, including a view of the upper part of the valley of Nablous, rich, as its lower portion, in abundance of water, and fruit and flowers. We passed many picturesque village strongholds, like eagles' or rather vultures' nests, built on commanding summits, and having fertile valleys and groves of olives at their feet.

No old city in Palestine had a site so striking, so regal-looking, as the "hill of Samaria." It is a shapely hill, rising at the end of a fine valley, and moulded into a fitting platform for a great temple. On all sides it is circled by noble terraces, which must have once borne splendid wreaths of vines and olives, furnishing wine and oil in abundance to its luxurious inhabitants. The summit of the hill is flat, and was evidently levelled for the site of the public buildings which occupied it from the days of Baal and Ahab, to those of Augustus and Herod.* Fifteen columns rear their solitary heads on

* It is a remarkable fact, familiar, I have no doubt, to antiquaries, that one of our Scottish periods or "terms" is still called *Beltane*, which appears to be derived from *Baal* and *teine*, the Celtic for *fire*. Upon this day, even now, bonfires are lighted by the children

this flat, though it is uncertain to what building they belonged, or for what object they and their now fallen brethren were reared. It is when standing on this level that we can appreciate Omri's taste in making Samaria the site of his capital. The surrounding hills, plains, and valleys teem with every product of the soil. The Mediterranean is seen stretching its blue waters beyond the plain of Sharon; while its fresh breeze blow up the valleys and circulate all around. And one can see how easily besieging armies would have been visible on the amphitheatre of hills which surround Samaria on three sides, and from whence they could have looked down into the streets of the suffering city and witnessed its every movement.

Here there are very striking remains of a magnificent colonnade, composed of two ranges of pillars about 50 feet apart, and which it is conjectured—from the length of the terrace on which the sixty pillars yet stand—must have extended for about 3000 feet. It was probably the work of Herod, who adorned Sebaste.

There are also the ruins of a noble old church dedicated to St. John the Baptist. Few things are more sad than such ruins in Palestine, as they evidence a time

in our villages, and pence asked for keeping them up. In many parts of the North cakes are baked and several ceremonies observed in connection with the day and its bonfires.

when Christianity was so strong, and so hopeful of continued strength, that it built churches which shame most of those reared in later and richer times.

Close to the church is an old reservoir, which may have been the pool in which Ahab washed his bloody chariot. But all Samaria is ruins, nothing but ruins; and never were words more true than those which we read aloud here:—"Therefore I will make Samaria as an heap of the field, and as plantings of a vineyard: and I will pour down the stones thereof into the valley, and I will discover the foundations thereof."

The associations connected with the capital of Ephraim are very different from those suggested by the capital of Judah. They are all of abominable idolatries, cruel sieges, horrible famines, full indeed of dramatic interest, but more full of lamentation and woe.* When God's prophets appear in Samaria, or speak about it, it is but to lament and denounce its impiety, vices, and crimes. It was a powerful city, but "sensual, earthly, devilish." Yet that light of mercy and love which is in Christ for the chief of sinners, shone in the latter days on Samaria. When St. John—whose Boanerges' feelings were like the heaving waters of the deep ocean—desired fire from heaven to consume the Samaritans who refused to receive

* Read, for example, 1 Kings xx.; 2 Kings vi. 12-33.

Jesus into one of their villages, the Lord rebuked him, and said that He had come, not to destroy men's lives, but to save them; and simply turned aside to another village. "Thou art a Samaritan!" was one of the accusations hurled against Him. So indeed He was!—but in a deeper sense than Jew or Samaritan could understand. Verily as "a good Samaritan," He healed His brethren, sorely wounded by the enemy of soul and body; and by His example and teaching broke down the wall of hate which separated Samaritan from Jew, showing that if salvation was *of* the Jews, it was yet *for* the Samaritans, and for all men who would worship God in spirit and in truth. And so when giving commandment on the day of His ascension regarding the preaching of the Gospel, He remembered Samaria. And His disciples, too, remembered and obeyed His words, for Philip went down to preach there, as did also Peter and John, to strengthen the faith of the believers. So in spite of Omri and Ahab, and all the devil's work down to the days of Simon Magus, a church was formed, "and great joy was in that city"—a joy which no one has taken from its lowliest member, who passed in Christ from the old Samaria now in ruins, to the new Jerusalem eternal in the heavens!

XIII.

JEZREEL—SHUNEM—NAIN—NAZARETH.

XIII.

JEZREEL—SHUNEM—NAIN—NAZARETH.

AFTER leaving Samaria we passed, at some distance to the left, a gently swelling hill rising out of the plain, called *Tell Dothain.* Strange that the name of *Dothan* should still remain attached to this spot! Most willingly should we have turned aside for an hour to visit the place where that story of Joseph and his brethren began to unfold itself, which for ages has been read with breathless interest by the young child and the aged saint, and where also that wondrous scene occurred for the account of which I refer my readers to 2 Kings vi. 8-23. But we were prevented by that want so common in a world where men's lives are short—the want of time.

It is worth noticing, however, that the caravans from Gilead to Egypt still enter the hill country at Dothan, passing thence to the maritime plain by Gaza. I have never heard that the pit into which Joseph was let down has been discovered. But it is only a few years since the locality was identified; and no doubt our ignorance of it and of many spots associated with caves, rocks, and other unchanged features of the country, would to a large extent be dispelled, if such a society as that which has been formed for the exploration of Palestine were liberally encouraged.*

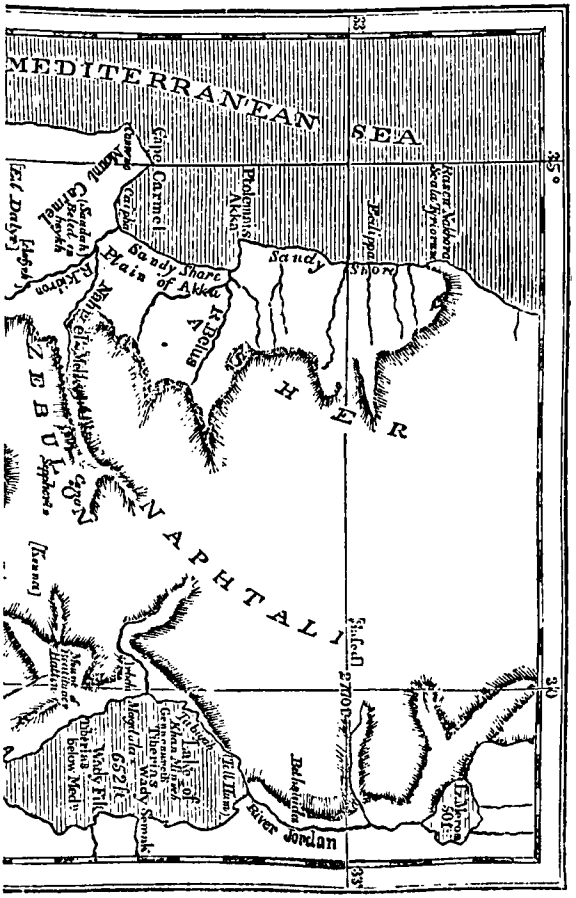
Our next halt was at *Jenin* (the ancient Engannim of Joshua xxi. 29), and there, on a grassy field, with a sparkling stream of water rushing past, we pitched our tents. Unseen frogs, more numerous than could be accommodated in the grand orchestra of the Crystal Palace, croaked a concert all night long. The village of Jenin rose above us; but we did not visit the dishonest and disorderly settlement, having been advised to give it what sailors call "a wide berth." We were a strong party, and showed our sense of security by adding to the brilliancy of the moon the light of a few Roman candles, whose

* Why does not this society appeal to the provinces and great commercial towns for support? It would be sure to get the necessary funds if some of its leading members would only take the trouble to bring its claims *viva voce* before the general public.

loud reports and starry rays impressed the Arabs with some respect for our power. So at least we fondly believed, although it was as well that they did not put our strength to the proof.

Jenin is on the edge of the great plain of Esdraelon, which we had to cross on our way to Nazareth. What a strange "Blue Book" of Turkish rule is this same plain of Esdraelon! It is one of the most fertile in the world. It might present such a scene of peasant prosperity, comfort, and happiness as could not be surpassed on earth. But instead of this it is a rough uninhabited common, and, but for the bounty of Nature—which, with never-failing patience and charity, returns an hundred-fold whatever is here committed to the soil—it would be a dreary wilderness. Unfortunately there is beyond the Jordan a numerous and wide-spread race of scoundrels, who live in tents, gallop about on fine horses, brandish spears, fire long guns, tell lies, rob their neighbours, and possess no virtue under heaven that is not serviceable to their greedy pockets or hungry stomachs. Romance they have none, unless it be the romance of plunder. Their "Arabian Nights" are but nights of robbery. The Turkish government, or even a London "Limited" Company possessing ordinary sense and enterprise, might, with a dozen rifled cannon placed in commanding positions, keep these Ishmaelites at bay, and defy them to

PLAIN OF ESDRAELON


MEDITERRANEAN SEA
Carmel
Ptolemais Akka
Sandy Shore
Plain of Akka
Sandy Shore
Plain of Esdraelon
Mount Tabor
Nain
Nazareth
Sea of Tiberias
Jordan
Bethsaida Julias
Capernaum
Tiberias
Magdala
Hattin
Kedesh Naphtali
Safet
Jordan
Dan
Jordan
Jordan
Jord

steal west of the Jordan. But as things are now managed, the Bedouin make a raid as a matter of amusement or profit. They swarm, like locusts, from the Hauran, cover the great plain, pitch their black tents, feed their camels, gallop their horses, reap the crops, shoot the peasants, and then return to their lairs beyond the Jordan, to crunch their marrow-bones at leisure, with none to molest them or make them afraid.

Much is said about the power of a certain Agyhil Agha who reigns over the plain, and is employed as a sort of detective, on the principle, I suppose, of setting one thief to catch another. Agha, from suspicion or jealousy, was at one time dismissed by the government of Constantinople, and another governor, or pasha, or detective, put in his place. But he attacked the Turkish troops who were sent to seize him, and massacred about eighty of them. Having thus shown his talent and force of character to the satisfaction of the Sublime Porte, he was forthwith re-appointed police-officer of the district. Such is Turkish "government." There is no doubt, however, that Agyhil Agha is a powerful chief, and exercises much authority over the district, protecting Christian and Moslem with even-handed justice, and being a great terror to evil-doers from the Hauran. Travellers are therefore recommended to obtain, for guide, counsellor, and friend, one of Agha's troopers,

who, when paid reasonable black-mail, will secure the lives and property of those committed to his charge. Our worthy dragoman, Hadji Ali, did not, however, deem it necessary to adopt this precaution, although he expressed anxiety to see us safely across the Pirate Gulf. Begging for my pistol, he loaded it, and gallantly went ahead as guard and scout.*

We pushed on from Jenin towards Jezreel, which is about seven miles to the north. The low point on which Jezreel is situated runs into the plain of Esdraelon from the high ridge of Gilboa, dividing it into two unequal bays. Approaching Jezreel from the south, there is little apparent ascent, but the plateau on which it is built falls rapidly on the north side, by a descent of 200 feet or so, to the other portion of the plain which lies between it and the range of the Little Hermon, or El Duhy, and which is called the plain of Jezreel, though it is but a bay of Esdraelon. On or near the spot where

* Though we laughed at Hadji's fears, and put them down to a little love of display or of excitement, yet I learn from M. de Pressensé's narrative of his tour, that our former fellow-traveller, the ex-Duke of Modena, was robbed on this plain a few days after we crossed it! As a warning to travellers, I may here state that my pistol, which was sent home in a box from Beyrout, was, on examination by the Custom-house officers at Liverpool, found to be loaded. Never having loaded it myself, and being ignorant of Hadji's having done so, I very carelessly did not think of examining it before it was packed.

Ahab's Palace is likely to have stood, is an ancient tower, built I know not when, or by whom. We ascended to its upper story, and there, through three windows, opening to the east, west, and north, obtained excellent views of all the interesting portions of the surrounding landscape. Beneath us lay the famous plain—a rolling sea of verdure, yet lonely looking, and without inhabitants. We saw no villages or huts dotting its surface—not even a solitary horseman, but only troops of gazelles galloping away into the distance, and some birds of prey, apparently vultures, wheeling in the sky, and doubtless looking out for work from their masters the Bedouin. This green prairie stretches for upwards of twenty miles towards the Mediterranean. It is the more striking from its contrast with the wild bare hills among which we had been travelling, and with those which look down immediately upon it. It separates the highlands of Southern Palestine from the hill country of the more lowland north, as the plain along which the railway passes from Lochlomond to Stirling separates the highlands of Rob Roy from the lowland hills of the Campsie range that rise above the valley of the Clyde.

This tower of Jezreel is another of those points of view which command a number of famous historical places, the sight of which, with their relative positions, gives great clearness and vividness to the Bible narra-

tives. Standing on the tower, we see, through the window looking northward, three or four miles off, the range of the Little Hermon (a *fac simile* of the Pentlands, near Edinburgh), with the village of Shunem on one of its slopes. Through the eastern window the view is filled up by the rolling ridge of Gilboa. The western window opens to the plain vanishing in the distance with the long ridge of Carmel, and other hills bounding it to the south, and the hills of Galilee to the north. With map and Bible in hand, let us look through these open windows, and see how much of the past is recalled and revivified by even one view in Palestine.

Through the opening to the north, we see Shunem, where dwelt the good Shunamite, whose little humbly-furnished chamber in the wall welcomed the great prophet "who oft passed by" that way, and who must therefore have been familiar with every object which now meets our gaze, as well as with many others that have passed away. We see at a glance how the afflicted mother, with the thoughts of her dead child and of "the man of God" in her heart, would cross the plain to the range of Carmel, ten or twelve miles off. We also see how from its summit the Prophet would see her riding over the plain, and how he would have accompanied her back again.

And Shunem, with Gilboa (seen out of the eastern

window), recall two great battles familiar to us:—the battle of Gideon with the hordes of the Midianites who swarmed along the sides of Hermon, and the battle of Saul with the Philistines who occupied the same position.

From Gilboa, Gideon with his selected army descended. Immediately beneath it we can see the fountain—gleaming like burnished silver in the sun's rays—where doubtless Gideon had separated the rash and the cowardly from his army. Descending at night with his select band from these rocky heights, he must have passed the narrow valley which lay between him and Shunem. Then with three hundred lights suddenly revealed and gleaming on every side, as if belonging to a great army, and with the piercing war-cry of "The Sword of the Lord and of Gideon!" he fell like a lightning-stroke on the sleeping and careless host, who, seized by a panic, fled in terror before the pursuing warriors, down the steep descent to the fords of the Jordan.

On the same place, too, the host of the Philistines, which made Saul sore afraid, pitched their tents on the night before they attacked the king and his son on Gilboa. One sees how Saul must have then travelled to En-dor. It lies two hours off on the other side of Hermon. He must have gone round the right flank of the enemy, crossing the shoulder of the hill to reach it.

One of the most dreary spectacles of human misery was that journey to the foul den of the witch of En-dor! We see the tall form, bent like a pine-tree beneath the midnight storm, but every inch a king in spite of the disguise, enter the cave in darkness and bow down before the deceiving hag. How touching his longing to meet Samuel, who had known and loved him in his better days; and his craving desire, however perverted, to obtain in his loneliness the sympathy of any spirit, whether alive or dead. And when he sees, or rather believes that the wicked impostor sees, the form of his old friend, what a wail rises from his broken heart:—"I am sore distressed! The Philistines make war against me, and God is departed from me, and answereth me by dreams no more!" The only parallel to it is the picture given by Shakespeare of Richard the Third the night before he was slain:—

> "I shall despair:—there is no creature loves me;
> And if I die, no soul shall pity me."

But Saul was loved by one whom his proud and eager ambition dragged down with himself on the bloody battle-field; and he was pitied by one who had ever reverenced his kingly head, and had dispelled the brooding darkness from his soul by the cunning minstrelsy of the harp. And the sweet singer of Israel has for ever

invested those sterile hills of Gilboa with a charm, by his incomparable lament for Saul and Jonathan,—by the womanly love which it breathes for his old friend, and the chivalrous generosity, the godlike charity, which it pours out in tears over his old enemy:—"Saul and Jonathan were pleasant in their lives, and in their death they were not divided!"

As if to make the scene of that battle-field still more complete, the top of the hill of Beth-shaan (now called Beisan) rises, like Dumbarton rock, close under the hill of Gilboa, and overhangs the valley of the Jordan. To the gates of its citadel the bodies of Saul and his three sons were fastened, until removed by the brave men of Jabesh-gilead,* from the opposite side of the Jordan, who thus testified their remembrance of the time when Saul had delivered them, thirty years before, from the Amorites.†

But the interest and teaching of this old battle-plain are not yet exhausted. As we look out of the opposite window, towards the south and west, we see to the left a long line of low hills which here and there send points into the plain, with retiring bays and valleys between, and end at the smooth ridge of Mount Carmel. On the shore of one of those green bays, seven or eight miles off, we see Taanach, and four miles or so beyond, Me-

* 1 Sam. xxxi. 11. † 1 Sam. xi. 3, 4.

giddo, past which "the waters of Megiddo" flow to join the Kishon. Now it was from Tabor, which is concealed from us by the ridge of the Little Hermon, that Barak, at the instigation of Deborah, marched about twelve miles across the plain from the north, and amidst a storm of wind and rain attacked the chariots of Sisera in the marshes of the Kishon, and gained that famous victory which freed Israel from the terrible thraldom in which they had been held by the heathen Canaanites.

At Megiddo, too, the good Josiah was killed in his brave but foolish attempt to stay the progress of the king of Egypt when going to attack the Assyrians.

Again we notice from the same window, a few miles off in the plain, what looks like a ruin. It is El Fuleh, the remains of an old Crusaders' fortress, and famous as the scene of the "battle of Mount Tabor," where a French force of 3000 men under Kleber, resisted in square, for six hours, a Turkish army of 30,000, half cavalry and half infantry. Then they were joined by Napoleon with fresh troops, and gained the battle. After all it was a fruitless victory to the great commander, for Sir Sidney Smith checked his Eastern progress by the brave defence of Acre—another scene of battle almost belonging to the plain of Esdraelon. It is strange indeed to have thus connected in the same place, battles fought by Barak, Gideon, Saul, and Napoleon! It is probably from the

fact of this place having been of old the great battle-field of Palestine, that in the book of Revelation it is made the symbol of the mysterious conflict called "the battle of Armageddon" or "the city of Megiddo."

And there are other associations still suggested by the landscape. The most tragic and dramatic histories in the Old Testament are recalled by the place we stand on, and by Carmel in the distance. For on that height beyond Megiddo, and on a spot which with highest probability can be identified, the great Elijah met the prophets of Baal, in a terrible conflict, God himself testifying to His faithful servant, who apparently was a solitary witness for His being and character. From that spot, twelve miles off, the prophet, borne up by an ecstatic fervour at such a crisis in his own life and in the life of the nation, ran, amidst the storm of wind and rain, before the chariot of Ahab to this Jezreel:—"It came to pass in the meanwhile, that the heaven was black with clouds and wind, and there was a great rain. And Ahab rode, and went to Jezreel. And the hand of the Lord was on Elijah; and he girded up his loins, and ran before Ahab to the entrance of Jezreel."

And to this Jezreel the same Elijah, after having been threatened by the murderess Jezebel, returned from his mysterious and awful journey through the wilderness to Horeb. Weak and fearful as a man, but strong

in God, he came to slay Ahab and Jezebel with the sword of his mouth for the murder of poor Naboth. "And the word of the Lord came to Elijah the Tishbite, saying, Arise, go down to meet Ahab king of Israel, which is in Samaria: behold, he is in the vineyard of Naboth, whither he is gone down to possess it. And thou shalt speak unto him, saying, Thus saith the Lord, Hast thou killed, and also taken possession? And thou shalt speak unto him, saying, Thus saith the Lord, In the place where dogs licked the blood of Naboth shall dogs lick thy blood, even thine. And Ahab said to Elijah, Hast thou found me, O mine enemy? And he answered, I have found thee: because thou hast sold thyself to work evil in the sight of the Lord."

And here, too, where we stand, occurred all that terrible and almost unequalled tragedy recorded in the 9th chapter of the 2nd Book of Kings, when Jehu was selected as a most willing instrument in God's Providence for executing judgment on an infamous family. The whole living scene of horror seems to pass before our eyes;—King Joram living here with his mother, Jezebel, while recovering from his wounds;—King Ahaziah, courtly, but unprincipled, coming from Jerusalem to visit Joram;—the sudden appearance of Jehu driving furiously along the plain, from Jabesh-gilead, and easily seen six miles off;—the meeting of the kings

with him in the vineyard of Naboth, probably near yonder fountain in the plain which had watered the poor man's garden of herbs;—the death of Joram;—the flight of Ahaziah to Jenin, and then to Megiddo, where he died;—the hurling of the wicked Jezebel out of the window, in spite of her paint and her hypocrisy, and her destruction by the wolfish dogs, which does not pain me, but indeed gives me great satisfaction—she was so vile! And then—for the horrible history of the place is not over—the ghastly pile of seventy heads of the sons of Ahab slain at Samaria, and the subsequent massacre of all connected with the house and palace of Ahab

All these incidents are recalled from the tower of Jezreel as we gaze on the several places where they occurred. It restores them all with as much vividness as the field of Waterloo recalls the events of that great battle. But Nature has resumed her quiet reign over the hill of Jezreel. All is silent and desolate now; Baal and his worshippers have passed away, and so have the calves of Bethel and of Dan, and the very memory of those events and their actions has departed from the land. Evil, like a fierce hurricane, always blows itself out; while good, like the sun, shines ever on from generation to generation. And so while Ahab and Jezebel have ceased to influence the world except as witnesses for God's righteous opposition to evil, Elijah, once

alone and broken-hearted, and anxious to find a grave, lives in the heart of the Christian Church, as one transfigured with his Lord, and the type of every faithful brother.

We were very thankful to have stood on this tower of Jezreel. It is a noble pivot for memory to turn upon. It made whole chapters of history much clearer to us.

We crossed the plain, and passed through Shunem. There are no "great ladies" there now, as it is a very squalid village; nor did its inhabitants appear to be descendants of any good Shunamites, male or female, for we were pelted with stones when passing through. Fortunately, however, the stones were neither very large nor very near, serving only to make us quicken our pace, and to make Hadji scold in fierce guttural Arabic, with pistol in hand. The attack was made by a number of boys, from the heights, and was doubtless prompted by the universal love of mischief peculiar to the young portion of our race, rather than by any hatred of Nazarenes peculiar to the place.

We crossed Hermon, and found ourselves in a small decayed village on the edge of another bay of Esdraelon, which rolls between the hills of Galilee and Hermon to the north. Hadji Ali recommended us to halt here, as it was an excellent place for lunch, having shelter from the heat, good water, and above all a friendly sheik, who

would sell him a good lamb. But the village had attractions to us which Hadji knew not of. It was Nain. It is poor, confused, and filthy, like every village in Palestine, but its situation is very fine, commanding a good view of the plain, with the opposite hills, and especially of Tabor, that rises like a noble wooded island at the head of the green bay. And Nain, in the light of the Gospel history, is another of those fountains of living water opened up by the Divine Saviour, which have flowed through all lands to refresh the thirsty. How many widows, for eighteen centuries, have been comforted, how many broken hearts soothed and healed, by the story of Nain,—by the unsought and unexpected sympathy of Jesus, and by His power and majesty. It was here that He commanded those who carried the bier of the widow's only son to stop, and said to the widow herself, "Weep not," and to her son, "Arise!" and then "delivered him to his mother," the most precious gift she could receive, and such as a divine Saviour alone could bestow.

What has Nineveh or Babylon been to the world in comparison with Nain? And this is the wonder constantly suggested by the insignificant villages of Palestine, that their names have become parts, as it were, of the deepest experiences of the noblest persons of every land, and every age.

There are many remains of old tombs to the east of the village, and one may conjecture that it was as our Lord came into the city from Capernaum, that he met the procession going towards the tombs in that direction.

Hadji's hopes as to our getting a lamb in Nain were fulfilled. The sheik sold us one, and the moment the bargain was concluded, he unexpectedly drew his knife, and killed the animal in our presence.*

We crossed the plain and began to ascend the hills of Galilee which rise abruptly from it. The day was unpleasantly hot, and the sun beat on us with a heat more fierce than we had hitherto experienced in Palestine. The ascent of the mountain, too, was by a wild path, which, as when descending to El Heramyeh, ran for some time along the channel of a torrent. There is another path further north, which is shorter, I believe, but it is rougher still. The end of our day's journey, however, was the early home of Jesus. And who would grudge any amount of heat or fatigue when pushing on for such a destination! We soon descried the white houses of Nazareth, and with an eager inquiring look gazed on the inland basin, as I may call it, which, like a

* Before flaying the lamb, an incision was made in the skin near the hind foot, when the sheik, applying his mouth to the orifice, inflated the whole skin. This seemed to make the operation of flaying much easier. For aught I know, this practice may be common, but I never saw it before or since.

green nest, lies concealed from the gaze of the outer world among these beautiful secluded hills. We entered the town, and held straight on by church and convent, until, through narrow crowded bazaars and filthy lanes, we reached the further outskirts, and found our tents pitched in an olive grove, whose venerable trees have sheltered many a traveller. How much of the pleasure derived from seeing an object, such as a great work of art, or a scene of beauty or of historical interest, is derived from sympathy with others who have experienced the same feelings? Not alone, therefore, but with thousands who had gone before us, we travelled through Palestine, and looked out from the olive grove on the hills of Nazareth. I did not visit any church, Greek or Latin. I had no wish to see the Holy Place of the Annunciation, as pointed out by the Greeks in their church at one end of the town, or by the Latins in theirs at the other. I had not the curiosity even to examine the place in the Franciscan Convent where that house of the Virgin once stood which was conveyed by angels to Loretto, and which, having received the sanction of the Infallible Church in 1518 through the Papal Bull of Leo X., is daily visited by greater crowds of admiring pilgrims than any holy place in Palestine, or perhaps in the world. I was much more anxious to exclude every thought and object which could distract my mind when

seeking to realise this place as the home of Jesus of Nazareth.

When the sun set I walked, all alone, among the hills. The night was illumined by a full moon, which seemed to stand out of the sky as if it did not belong to the depths of blue beyond. Every object was revealed with marvellous clearness; while the dark shadows from rock and tree, from "dell and dingle," with the subdued light veiling the bare white limestone, gave not only relief to the eye, but added to the beauty and picturesqueness of the scene. A low undulating ridge of hills encloses the green plain that lies like a lake, with Nazareth built on one of its shores. I soon reached a point opposite to the town, where I sat down, protected from the intrusion of any chance traveller or prowler by the deep shadow of a tree. From thence, amid a silence broken only by the barking of the never-silent dogs, I gazed out, feeling painfully, as I often did before, the difficulty of "taking it all in." I inwardly repeated "This is Nazareth! Here—in this town—among these hills—Jesus was brought up as a child, and was subject to His meek and loving mother, 'full of grace;' here as a boy 'He grew in wisdom and in stature;' here for many years He laboured as a man for His daily bread; here He lived as an acquaintance, neighbour, and friend. For years he gazed on this landscape, and walked along these moun-

tain paths, and worshipped God among these solitudes, 'nourishing a life sublime' and far beyond our comprehension. Hither, too, He came 'in the Spirit,' after His baptism by water and by the Holy Ghost, and His consecration to the ministry; and after that new and mysterious era in His hitherto simple and uneventful life, when He was tempted of the devil. Here He preached His first sermon in the synagogue in which it had hitherto been His 'custom' to worship and to receive instruction; and here, too, He was first rejected—the dark cloud of hate from His brethren gathering over His loving soul. And it was on one of these rocks that there was a rehearsal of the scene at Calvary. Can all this," I asked myself, "be true? Was this indeed the theatre of such events as these?"

There was nothing very grand in the appearance of the place, yet the circumstances under which I saw it prevented any painful conflict arising in the mind between the real and the ideal. The town, with its white walls, all gemmed with lights scintillating with singular brilliancy in the mountain air, seemed to clasp the rugged hill-side like a bracelet gleaming with jewels. Masses of white rock shone out from dark recesses. The orchards and vineyards below were speckled with patches of bright moonlight breaking in among their shadows; while peace and beauty rested over all.

The question may naturally suggest itself to the reader, as it often does to the traveller, whether an earthly setting to such a picture as the life of Jesus has not a tendency to weaken one's faith in the divinity, in proportion as it compels him to realise the humanity, of Christ's Person? The reply which each traveller will give must necessarily be affected not only by his previous belief regarding Christ's Person, but by the proportion of faith, so to speak, which he has been more or less consciously in the habit of exercising with reference to our Lord's divine and human natures. Whether it was that in my own case the humanity of our Lord has ever been very real and precious to me, I know not, but the effect upon my mind of the scene at Nazareth was, if possible, to intensify my faith in His divinity. For as I gazed on that insignificant and lowly town, so far removed at all times from the busy centres of even provincial influence, I remembered how, in the memorable sermon preached there to His old acquaintances and kinsfolk, these words were uttered by Him:—"The Spirit of the Lord is upon me, because He hath anointed me to preach the gospel to the poor; He hath sent me to heal the broken-hearted, to preach deliverance to the captives, and recovering of sight to the blind, to set at liberty them that are bruised, to preach the acceptable year of the Lord;" and how that same Jesus added, "This day is this

scripture fulfilled in your ears." I then recalled the previous life of the Man who dared thus to speak:—how since His boyhood He had lived, among the people whom He then addressed, a life marked by no sign or wonder, but only by holiness, which men were too commonplace and unholy to see,—a life, too, in its ordinary visible aspects so like their own, that when He thus spoke all were amazed as if a great king had been suddenly revealed who had been from childhood among them in disguise; and they asked with astonishment, "Is not this Joseph's son?"

Recalling this, and contrasting it with all that had since sprung up out of the holiest hearts, and all that had been accomplished on earth in the name of Jesus, then arose again the question put 1800 years ago:—"Can any good thing come out of Nazareth?" And what reply could I then give to it from personal experience, and from the light cast upon it by "the long results of time"? As a minister and member of the Church of Christ, and as a representative of a vast multitude on earth, and of a greater multitude now before the throne of God, I could but say, "Yea!" As sure as there is a right and wrong, as sure as there is a God, the highest good that man can possess and enjoy has come to us out of this very Nazareth! From an experience tested in every land, in every age, in every possible

variety of outward and inward circumstances, we know that Jesus of Nazareth has proved himself to be what He said He was when He preached that first sermon; we know and can testify that in our own spirits He has verily "fulfilled that word"—that He has healed our broken hearts, delivered us who were captives to sin, restored our sight when blind, and given us that light which carries with it its own evidence of truth, and enables us to see God, filling our hearts with joy and gladness! This was my reply.

And a further question may suggest itself—"Who was, or who is, this person, Jesus of Nazareth, to whom we owe all this good?" A man like ourselves? Yes, but surely more than a mere man! The very perfection of His humanity points to something above humanity. And our faith is not in a Christ that was, to whom we owe all this good, but in a Christ that is—in one who "was dead, but is alive and liveth for evermore," and who is found to be the resurrection and the life of every man who has faith in Him. Therefore it was that, believing and knowing this, the Divine Person of Christ, as I gazed at lowly Nazareth, reached the sky, and filled the whole earth with His glory!

Next day we ascended the hill above the town, to enjoy the view from the famous Wely. There is not in Palestine a more commanding or more glorious pros-

pect than this. It embraces a landscape which almost takes in the hills overlooking Jerusalem to the south, and the highlands of the north rolling up in crossing ridges and increasing in height until crowned by the snows of the majestic Hermon. To the west is the Mediterranean stretching to the horizon, the brown arms of the bay of Acre embracing it where it touches the land; while to the east are the hills of Gilead beyond the Jordan, vanishing in the pathless plains of the Hauran. Within this circumference every object is full of interest. The magnificent plain of Esdraelon lies mapped beneath us with its verdant bays, surrounded by famous shores. The view also among the hills of Galilee is most beautiful, varied as it is by rich inland plains too remote for the ravages of the Bedouin, and by picturesque and broken knolls clothed with wood, vines, and olives, and surrounded by verdant grass and corn-fields. There is one bright gem in the centre of all—Cana of Galilee—where He, who came eating and drinking, sanctified for ever the use of all God's gifts, calling none of them common or unclean, and the memories of which will for ever mingle with the joys of the marriage-feast. All around us were the "ruins famed in story," which we had seen on the previous day.

One thought was constantly present—Jesus must often have gazed on this view, and recalled the events recorded

in Old Testament history suggested by it. It is remarkable that in His first sermon preached at Nazareth He alludes to the two great prophets, Elijah and Elisha, who made this plain illustrious by their deeds. What His thoughts and anticipations were, as He meditated on all the past for many a year, cannot be guessed by us. Enough that we were privileged to walk where He walked, to see what He saw, and, best of all, to know the truth of what He taught.

XIV.

NAZARETH TO TIBERIAS.

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FROM the "Wely" we pursued our journey to Tiberias, and bade farewell to Nazareth. Why attempt to describe our road? No one who has not travelled it will *see* it from any words of mine, and those who have seen it need not have recalled to them what, after all, is not particularly worth remembering.

The most striking view on the road is that of the famous "Kürün," or "Horns of Hattîn." The general appearance of the hill is this—

I have applied the word famous to these "horns," not because of the view either of them or from them, though

both are striking; but because they mark the traditional Mount of the Beatitudes. This tradition has more in its favour than most traditions, as the position of the mountain with reference to the Lake of Tiberias in its neighbourhood, and the formation of the "horns," reconcile the narrative of the circumstances in which "the Sermon" seems to have been preached, first from one height, and then from a lower. Dr. Stanley says regarding it:—"It is the only height seen in this direction from the shores of the Lake of Gennesareth. The plain on which it stands is easily accessible from the lake, and from that plain to the summit is but a few minutes' walk. The platform at the top is evidently suitable for the collection of a multitude, and corresponds precisely to the 'level place' (*τόπου πεδινοῦ*), to which He would 'come down' as from one of its higher horns to address the people. Its situation is central both to the peasants of the Galilean hills, and the fishermen of the Galilean lake, between which it stands, and would therefore be a natural resort both to 'Jesus and His disciples,' when they retired for solitude from the shores of the sea, and also to the crowds who assembled 'from Galilee, from Decapolis, from Jerusalem, from Judæa, and from beyond Jordan.' None of the other mountains in the neighbourhood could answer equally well to this description, inasmuch as they are merged into the uniform barrier of hills round the

Lake; whereas this stands separate — 'the mountain' which alone could lay claim to a distinct name, with the exception of the one height of Tabor, which is too distant to answer the requirements."

It was on these horns also that the last great battle of the Crusaders took place. A strange comment this on the Beatitudes! The first and best account of this famous battle was published by Dr. Robinson. Enough for me to tell, that on the 5th of July, 1187, the army of noble knights, 2000 in all, with 8000 followers, drew up in order of battle around the Horns of Hattîn to meet the brave and generous Saladeen. The Crusaders had behaved in a most treacherous manner to the Moslems, and had grossly broken their treaty with them. Saladeen was more righteous than they. They carried as their rallying banner the true cross from Jerusalem; but the Moslems had its justice on their side, though not its wood. After days of suffering and after many gross military mistakes, the Crusaders found themselves terribly beaten, and all that remained of them on the evening of this awful battle-day gathered on and around the Horns of Hattîn. King Guy of Lusignan was the centre of the group; around him were the Grand Master of the Knights Templars, Raynald of Chatillon, Humphrey of Turon, and the Bishop of Lydda, the latter of whom bore the Holy Cross. All at last were slain or taken prisoners,

and the Holy Land was lost. Few know these Crusaders' names now, or care for them. They were famous in their day, and had their ballads and lady-loves, and were the admired of many a pilgrim. But they represented an age that was passing away,—an age that had done its work in the world. Yet who can see with indifference the spot where that storm of battle roared, amid the gleaming of axes, the flashing of swords, the streaming of banners, the loud shouts and yells of victory or despair, and know that it was the burial-day of the Crusaders, and the triumph for a time of the Moslem, without stopping his horse, gazing on the scene, sighing, meditating, and then —alas for the bathos as well as the pathos of human nature !—probably lighting his cigar ?

We rode along the upland ridge which ends in a gentle ascent leading to the summit of the hills that form the western side of Tiberias, and rise about 1000 feet above its waters. We thought that we would have had time to ascend this height and look down from it upon the whole Lake; but the distance to it was greater than we anticipated, and so, descending the steep sides of the hill, we gained the ordinary track which leads round its base to Tiberias. We soon came in sight of the Lake, and thus had another dream of our life realised ! Passing round the town, with its many ruins, few palms, and great poverty, we reached our tents, which we found delight-

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fully pitched on the shore of the Lake, and at a safe and pleasant distance from the town.

The first impressions made upon me by the scenery of the Lake of Tiberias are very easily described. *Visibly* it was but a lake, and "nothing more." The east and west shores possess very different characters. The eastern shore has the same aspect as that of the Dead Sea—the same kind of terraced look, as if caused by a series of volcanic upheavings, at long intervals.* The western shore is decidedly Scotch, owing, I presume, to its trap (?) as well as its limestone. Its rounded hill-tops and broken grass-covered slopes certainly wore to me an old familiar look, recalling the hills of Moffat, or those round many of the Scotch lakes.

The desolation of the shores of the Lake is another feature which at once strikes us. We see no trees—no white specks of houses—no trace of life—but a dead monotony without any variety of outline to give picturesque interest. The Lake is about fourteen miles long, six to seven broad at its centre, and five at Tiberias. Yet there is no town on its shores but this ruined

* The view of Tiberias given by Roberts in his 'Sketches of the Holy Land,' does not recall to me a single feature of the scene except the sweep of the bay in the foreground. In everything save buildings Roberts is wofully inaccurate. I have seen no photograph or drawing which gives any correct idea of the shores of the Lake of Tiberias such as Hunt gives of the eastern side of the Dead Sea in his picture of 'The Scapegoat.'

Tiberias; and so wholly given up to the lawless Bedouin is its eastern side that there is danger in landing there unless under the protection of some chief, to whom liberal *backsheesh* must be paid. Yet this Lake was in our Saviour's days one of the busiest scenes in Palestine, with a dozen or more flourishing towns on its shores,—gay palaces giving to it the air of wealth and splendour, and a thriving traffic enlivening its waters. As Dr. Stanley remarks, "In that busy stir of life were the natural elements out of which His future disciples were to be formed. Far removed from the capital, mingled, as we have seen, with the Gentile races of Lebanon and Arabia, the dwellers by the Sea of Galilee were free from most of the strong prejudices which in the south of Palestine raised a bar to His reception. 'The people' in 'the land of Zabulon and Nephthalim, by the way of the sea beyond Jordan, Galilee of the Gentiles,' had 'sat in darkness;' but from that very cause 'they saw' more clearly 'the great light' when it came: 'to them which sat in the region and the shadow of death,' for that very reason 'light sprang up' the more readily. He came to 'preach the Gospel to the poor,' to 'the weary and heavy laden'—to 'seek and to save that which was lost.' Where could He find work so readily as in the ceaseless toil and turmoil of these teeming villages and busy waters? The heathen or half-heathen 'publicans' or

tax-gatherers would be there, sitting by the lake side 'at the receipt of custom.' The 'women who were sinners' would there have come, either from the neighbouring Gentile cities, or corrupted by the license of Gentile manners. The Roman soldiers would there be found quartered with their slaves, to be near the palaces of the Herodian princes, or to repress the turbulence of the Galilean peasantry. And the hardy boatmen, filled with the faithful and grateful spirit by which that peasantry was always distinguished, would supply the energy and docility which He needed for His followers. The copious fisheries of the lake now assumed a new interest. The two boats by the beach; Simon and Andrew casting their nets into the water; James and John on the shore washing and mending their nets; the 'toiling all the night and catching nothing;' 'the great multitude of fishes so that the net brake;' Philip, Andrew, and Simon from 'Bethsaida' the 'House of Fisheries;' the 'casting a hook for the first fish that cometh up;' the 'net cast into the sea, and gathering of every kind'—all these are images which could occur nowhere else in Palestine but on this one spot, and which from that one spot have now passed into the religious language of the civilised world, and in their remotest applications, or even misapplications, have converted the nations and shaken the thrones of Europe."

The town of Tiberias is not certainly very lively to look at, though its insect-life has obtained a world-wide notoriety. I never entered it, as I more and more felt that any supposed gain to my stock of information from the spectacles of filth and poverty which I knew it contained would only be a loss to me in seeking to realise the holy past. I therefore saw its walls only, and these were so shaken, cracked, and crumbled by the great earthquake which occurred in 1857, that their chief interest consists in the visible effects of that fearful earth-heaving. The present town is comparatively modern. The ancient one was built by that Herod who "feared John" the Baptist, "knowing that he was a just man and a holy, and observed him; and when he heard him, he did many things, and heard him gladly." Yet he murdered him. It was this same sensual and superstitious tyrant to whom Jesus, when He met him face to face for the first time on the day of His crucifixion, preached the awful sermon of *silence;* for Herod "questioned with Him in many words, but He answered him nothing!" The ruins of the old city are scattered over the space between the hills and the Lake to the south, as far as the hot baths. Mingled with the shells on the shore are innumerable small bits of what had formed mosaic pavements. We easily gathered many specimens.

We had hardly reached our tents and got settled in

them when a boat loaded with Jews, pulled past us from the baths to the town. The number of people in it sunk it to the gunwale, reminding us oddly enough of the little boats and tall forms which are represented in Raphael's cartoon of "The Miraculous Draught of Fishes." A number of men were standing in it singing and clapping their hands in chorus. It was a rather joyous scene, a rare thing in these parts. We were told that it was a wedding procession.

There are only two boats on the lake, and we sent a messenger to the town to secure one of them for us after dark, requesting that some fishermen with their nets would accompany it. For other reasons than they could conjecture, we were anxious to "go a-fishing." They came accordingly, when the stars and moon were out in the sky. Friends who had travelled with us from Jerusalem accompanied us, and we rowed out on the Lake. Few words were spoken, but each had his own thoughts, as these rough men cast out their nets for a draught, wholly ignorant of other fishermen who long ago had done the same. They were thinking only of *backsheesh*, and possibly of our folly in giving it, the chances of getting anything where we let down the net being so small. It is unnecessary to suggest the memories which arose as the net was dropped in the calm sea rippling under the moonlight; or as, after encircling a wide space for our

prey, we "caught nothing." Were Peter and the sons of Zebedee, and the other Apostles, all of whom were chosen on the shores of this Lake, just such men as these? Were they such "earthen vessels," made rich only by the treasures of grace with which the Lord filled them day by day through His divine teaching? And if not so supernaturally educated and upheld, how have such men taught the world, become famous, and given names to the innumerable places of Christian worship which have been in all lands called after St. Peter, St. James, St. John? The Divine Spirit alone, who filled the man Christ Jesus, could have transfigured commonplace fishermen and publicans into Apostles, and made a commonplace lake a theatre of wonders.

We bathed in the Lake. I mention this otherwise trifling fact, as it accidentally made us aware of the singular distance to which sounds are conveyed along this shore. Our party had scattered themselves for convenience, and I was alone, when my friends began to converse at a considerable distance from me. I was astonished beyond measure when, considering the space between us, I heard what was spoken in the tones of ordinary conversation. This induced us to continue the experiment of talking, which ended in our conviction that, making all allowance for the well-known fact of sound being conveyed by water, we had never known

any place where the tones of the voice could be so far heard. Our words sounded as in a "whispering gallery." It was evident that on this shore a vast multitude might be addressed with perfect ease. Tiberias is 400, some say 600, feet below the level of the sea, and its banks are high. Does this account for the clear reverberations?

This Lake is, without question, the most interesting in the whole world. There is no part of Palestine, not excepting Jerusalem even, which is more associated with our Lord's life and teaching. Yet it is impossible to fix on a single spot here, as on the Mount of Olives or at Jacob's Well, and affirm with certainty that there Jesus stood and spoke. His steps cannot be discerned upon the deep; we only know that His holy feet walked over these waters, and that His commanding voice calmed their stormy waves. He had walked and taught on many places along the broad beach which stretches between the hills and the sea;—but where, we cannot tell! The silence of those lonely hills was often broken by His prayers at night, but God's angels alone know the spots where He uttered His "strong supplications," or those which He watered with His tears.

Opposite Tiberias is the Wady Fik, with its ancient tombs near the road leading to the famous stronghold of Gamala, and with steep hills descending into the Lake.

This is generally admitted to have been the place where our Lord healed the Gadarene demoniac,—a narrative which reveals at once man's spiritual and physical misery when possessed by evil; his weakness in attempting to free a brother from such tyranny; the gracious power of Jesus, Lord of the unseen world, in casting out the evil spirit; the blessed results visible in the man himself, sitting "clothed, and in his right mind," at the feet of Jesus; the wise and loving work given the restored man to do, "Go to thine own house, and show how great things the Lord hath done to thee;" and the overflowing of grateful love which impelled him to proclaim to the whole city the glad tidings of a deliverer from Satan.

Seated on the shore of the Lake, one naturally asks, where did that memorable scene occur which is recorded in the last chapter of St. John's Gospel? If ever a narrative shone in its own light of Divine truth, it is this one. Its simplicity and pathos, and its exquisite harmony with all we know and believe of Jesus, invest it with an interest which must ever increase with its study. The whole of the memorable scene comes before us as we ponder over the events of those few days:—the weary night of toil, foreshadowing the labours of the fishers of men—the unexpected appearance of the stranger in the shadow of early dawn—the miraculous draught of

fishes, a prophecy of future ingatherings to the Church of Christ—the instinctive cry of the beloved Apostle, "It is the Lord"—the leap of Peter into the sea at the feet of his Master—the humble meal, with such a company as has never since met on earth—the reverential silence first broken by our Lord—the thrice repeated question addressed in righteousness and love to him who had thrice denied Him—the all in all of that question, which involved the essential principle of Christian life, "Lovest thou me?"—the all in all of the command, which involved the essential rule of Christian practice, "Follow thou me"—the duty of those anxious about others shown by the reply to the inquiry, "What shall this man do?" "What is that to thee? follow thou me!"—the announcement of a martyr's death made to him, and to him only, who, from fear of death, had denied his Lord, conveying the blessed assurance that, even in death, Peter would glorify Him;—and the lesson taught to the Church of the untrustworthiness of even apostolic traditions, seeing that in the very lifetime of the Apostles a false tradition had gone abroad regarding the death of St. John, the true story being carefully reported by the Apostle himself:—all this, and more than words can express, is vividly recalled as we sit on this shore; yet it is in vain that we ask, On what precise spot did these events take place?

But there is no real cause of sorrow in our ignorance of such localities. The places where Jesus lived and taught were denounced by Him in terrible words. These words have been fulfilled, and the ruins (or rather the complete obliteration) of Capernaum once exalted to heaven, and of Chorazin and Bethsaida, typify only the ruin of the souls of those who in any place receive not the truth in the love of it. Yet the truth itself remains to us, quite independently of the mere accidental circumstances of time and place in which it was first spoken; and the words of Jesus, uttered in a few minutes, will ever remain the salt of the earth and the light of the world. The "Peace, be still," will calm many a storm; "It is I, be not afraid," will bring strength to many an anxious soul; "Lovest thou me?" will search many a heart; "Follow thou me" will direct many a pilgrim. The world will for ever be influenced, and the Church of God nourished, by the teaching given beside these waters;—by "the sermon on the mount;" the parables of "the sower," "the tares," the "treasure hid in the field," the "merchant seeking goodly pearls;" and by the lectures on "*formality*" (Matt. xv. 1), "*faith*" (John vi. 22), and on "*humility*," "*forbearance*," and "*brotherly love*" (Mark ix. 33).

The day we spent at Tiberias was Good Friday, and though we Presbyterians keep no day specially "holy"

except the Lord's day, yet knowing how many brethren "esteem this day above another" and "regard it unto the Lord," we remembered with them the great event, which is dear to us all, as being the life of the world. We could not forget that it was near this district that He "began to show to His disciples how He must suffer many things of the chief priests and scribes, be killed, and rise from the dead on the third day;" and that when Peter began, in his ignorance, to rebuke Him, He taught those precious lessons of self-denial which every Good Friday should recall as its practical teaching to all of us.

XV.

TIBERIAS TO SAFED.

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ON our march to Safed on Saturday morning, we again passed the town of Tiberias, and crossed the slope of the steep hill that descends to the portion of the lake beyond it. This promontory is the southern boundary of the famous plain of Gennesareth, which is three or four miles long by about one broad, and skirts the north-west corner of the lake. In all Palestine there are no three miles more interesting. The richness of the plain itself cannot be surpassed, though it is only partially and poorly cultivated by a few oppressed and miserable-looking armed peasants. Yet the glory of its vegetation, and the splendour of its flowering shrubs, suggest a vast "hothouse," whose walls have disappeared, but whose

precious exotics remain to beautify the earth. Its tropical heat, the excellence of its alluvial soil swept down from neighbouring hills throughout long ages, the streams of living water that flow through it, sufficiently account for its luxuriant fruitfulness. It is bordered by hills of picturesque form, imposing height, and varied outline. A noble gorge (Wady el Hymâm), with precipitous rocks, descends in one place, while others less wild open their green sides and pour in their fresh streams; and the mountain-mass topped by Safed rises 3000 feet above all. On this plain, too, and along a line of about seven miles north from Midjel, were those populous and thriving cities with whose names we are so familiar, and where such busy and momentous hours of our Lord's life on earth were spent. The sites of none of them have been certainly fixed,* with the exception of that of Magdala—whose name of Midjel is preserved in the present miserable cluster of huts at the very entrance to the plain, and which is for ever associated with her who was delivered from a mysterious possession of seven devils, and became full of love and devotedness to Jesus. But I have no doubt that with more time and better means of investigation, every site on the plain could be accurately deter-

* I do not attempt to enter on the question of sites, discussed so fully by Robinson, Stanley, Thomson, Wilson, Porter, Buchanan, and others; I must refer my readers to their works for full and ample information on the point.

mined. As it is, however, we know that within the space of a very few miles those lively and bustling cities described in the Gospel narrative once flourished; and we can to some extent restore, by the power of fancy, guided by history, the scenes which make this plain and its shore the most famous in the world.

Passing a stream above Khan Minyeh (the Capernaum of Robinson and others), we began the long and steep ascent to Safed, along a path disclosing views really beautiful, and in some places actually grand, as in the Wady Leimun, where the precipices attain a height of 700 or 800 feet.

An hour or so before reaching Safed, we were overtaken with such a deluge of rain as would have surprised even Glasgow and the west of Scotland. It combined the "pouring down in buckets" of England, with the "even down-pour" of Scotland. Where had our muleteer encamped? Were our tents floated off, or were they only soaked with water, and our beds and bags and portmanteaus reduced to a state of pulp? Hadji Ali, anticipating the worst, wisely suggested that we should proceed at once to the only house in the city where we were likely to get shelter and tolerable accommodation on fair terms. It was the Austrian Consul's. We consented to enter any ark, if we could only get out of the deluge. So for the Consul's we made, with dripping

horses, dripping hats, dripping clothes, and dripping noses. We entered the city by the channel of what seemed to be the common sewer rushing like a mountain rivulet, and halted at the rough steps which led to the door of a house, whose outward appearance was characterised by a humble disregard of all pretence to architecture, beyond what was actually needed to place one rough stone upon another, leaving spaces for a door and a few small windows. The chamber into which we were ushered was sufficiently cool. It had stone floors and stone-vaulted roof, but no furniture, save a Consular coat-of-arms, suspended on the wall, and bearing an eagle with two heads, which, by the way, seemed much more puzzled, distracted, and stupid than any eagle with only one head I had ever seen. We found that, although our tents were soaked, our luggage and beds were safe. So in a short time we managed to give our vault some signs of life and comfort. Another room into which ours opened was a kitchen—that is, it had a large chimney, and was full of smoke. Here Hadji and Nubi spread their mats and cooked our victuals, making themselves and us equally comfortable. Most thankful were we for our stone retreat, and not the less so when Consul Mierolowski presented himself, and proved to be a simple-hearted, frank, thoroughly kind man. He was delighted to let his lodgings to us, and thankful for the storm

which had driven us his way. He is the only Christian in the place, and very seldom sees any civilised Europeans. Travellers, in ordinary circumstances, live in their tents, and pitch them outside the town, passing him by. Speaking of the rain, he comforted us by remarking, in an offhand consular and statistical way, that an earthquake was due about this time, as they generally come periodically, and the state of the atmosphere was an unmistakeable warning. There had been a shock, moreover, three days before, which had made all the inhabitants rush out of their houses; and it was apt to repeat itself, he said, on the third day. We looked at the vaulted roof and stone walls, but said nothing. Earthquakes, the reader must understand, have been a familiar subject of conversation in Safed since 1837, when from two to three thousand persons perished in a few minutes. The houses circling the hill—like the terraces of the Tower of Babel in the old Bible pictures—then fell pell-mell on each other, crushing Jew and Mahometan into one mass of dead and dying. But as the Consul in announcing the probable return on this day, not necessarily of such an earthquake as would destroy the "Schlupwinkel," as he called Safed, but of such a tremor or shock as might throw us out of our beds—asked a light for his cigar, exclaiming when a few damp lucifers refused their light, "Tausend donnerwetter, noch

einmal!" his coolness made us pluck up courage and think of dinner.

The Consul dined with us, and was both intelligent and communicative, his German being very good. He entertained us with stories about the Jews, and the conduct of the Turkish officials towards them, and towards all whom they can swindle or oppress. "For," as he remarked, "these fellows who govern here, such as Abdul Kerim Effendi, or Moodir Bey, know not how long they may be in circumstances to make money. An intrigue by any one who has a larger purse to bribe the bigger purses, may take the prey out of their hands; so they must pluck and eat it as rapidly as possible. If they only gather and remit the amount of taxes which they bargained for, good; all above that sum which they can cheat the miserable people out of, or force from them, is so much gain to their own pockets."

"For example?" I said.

"For example? Well. A Jew not long ago brought a piece of ground here, and began to erect a house upon it. The Turkish official sent for him and told him, that one of the workmen had brought to him a bone, dug up accidentally from the ground. It was evident therefore that some true believer had been buried there, and that the house of a Jew could not possibly be erected on so holy a spot. The Jew must stop the building. 'And

lose all my money!' pleaded poor Moses in vain. But Moses knew his man, and expressing his deep regret for the mistake which he had so unintentionally committed, begged to know if a fine, say of 1000 piastres (that is, a bribe of course to the official) for his sin, would be a sufficient atonement? The official replied that he would consider. Having made up his mind to pocket the money and his orthodoxy, he forthwith got a stone cut with a cross upon it, and this he ordered to be buried in the supposed Mahometan graveyard. The 1000 piastres being paid in the meantime by the Jew, the Turk assembled some of the orthodox Gentiles along with the orthodox Jews, and expressing his doubts regarding the Mahometan origin of the bone, and his sincere wish to do justice to the Jew, suggested that they should dig and examine the earth with care. Soon the stone with the cross was exhumed. 'Ah!' said the Turk, 'I rejoice! It has been a Christian burial place: and what care you or I for the dogs? Proceed with your building!'"

The Consul described the Jews as being sunk to the lowest point of morality. Here let me remind the reader that there are in Palestine four cities called "holy" by the Jews;—Hebron, Jerusalem, Tiberias, and Safed. In each there has been a school of Jewish learning, which produced some great scholars—men whose names

are famous in every synagogue, and some of whom, such as Maimonides, whose tomb is outside Tiberias, are known to all students. Now the longer one lives in the world the more is he disposed to make exceptions to any generalisation affecting the character of any whole party, class, or sect. But, not forgetting this, I must admit that it is more than likely, from the circumstances in which the Jews of Palestine are placed, that they are, as a whole, very degraded. They live chiefly on the charity of their brethren in Europe, to whom appeals are annually made by men appointed for the purpose—and who receive a "consideration" in the way of per centage on their collections. This of itself is a strong temptation on the part of the recipients to be idle, lazy, and suspicious; and on the part of the Rabbis, who collect and distribute the alms, to be tyrannical and dishonest. Besides this, according to a principle of the Turkish Government, each religious persuasion, other than Mahometan, is allowed to manage its own affairs—their officials enjoying the power of life and death over those subject to them in ecclesiastical matters. This system saves trouble to the Government, which would derive no profit from saving men's lives, far less from executing justice. Thus it happens that the Jews in Palestine, as a class, are, as far as we could learn, fanatical and degraded—the Rabbis ruling with a rod of iron.

The following was told us by the Austrian Consul:—It is the law of the Jewish community, that any money which enters a holy city, belongs to the Rabbis on the death of its possessor. Now an Austrian Jew, with his son, had lately come, in bad health, to try the virtue of the baths at Tiberias. Feeling worse, he removed to the town of Tiberias itself, where he died. He left a considerable sum of money in a belt round his waist, of which his son and heir took possession. "It is ours!" said the Rabbis, "for he died in a holy city, and his personal property is thereby consecrated to holy purposes." "It is mine!" answered the son, "for I am his lawful heir by the laws of my country." The Rabbis urged, expostulated, threatened, bullied, cuffed,—but all in vain. "Refuse," they said, "and we won't bury your father, but shall cast his body into a cellar." The son remained obdurate. "You must then," said the Rabbis, "lodge with your father,"—and they locked him up in the cellar, in hot suffocating weather, with his father's dead body! Next day he was taken out, but still refusing obedience, he was seized and robbed of all he had. He then fled, and, as an Austrian subject, cast himself for protection on the Consul, our informant, who got him safely and speedily conveyed out of the country, where he ran the risk of being assassinated for daring to rebel against the Rabbis.

The Consul was at this time engaged in seeking to get redress.

Mr. Rogers, our well-known and excellent Consul at Damascus, who was formerly in Safed and Jerusalem, informed me afterwards that, upon claiming the property of a British Jew who died at Jerusalem, for the behoof of his family in England, burial of the body was refused by the Rabbis until the property was acknowledged to be theirs. This Mr. Rogers resisted, and determined to get the body buried himself. But when about to lower the Jew into his grave, in the Valley of Jehoshaphat, so hot a fire was opened on the burial party from concealed foes on both sides of the valley, that they had to fly for their lives, and secure a strong Turkish guard before they could accomplish their purpose!

The Consul read to us in German an official report made by him to the Government regarding the country, and enumerated in detail the several villages and towns within his circuit, mentioning the name of "Kaffirnahum." "What!" I exclaimed, "is there any place hereabout so called now? That would go far to set at rest a *questio vexata*—the site of Capernaum."—"Sometimes," he said, "it is called Tel Hum, but just as often Kaffirnahum, by the Arabs. There is no doubt about it." To determine this fact, I resolved to ask him to call in a few natives whom I might examine; but, as it was suggested

by one of our party that he might misunderstand this procedure as if we doubted his word, I did not prosecute inquiry in this way. Had I reported on my return home, however, that a Consul who has for years lived within a ride of three hours of Capernaum, had assured me that Kaffirnahum was always applied to an old site by the peasants who resided on the spot, such evidence would seem conclusive. Yet from subsequent conversations at Beyrout with Dr. Thomson, author of "The Land and the Book," and with Mr. Rogers, our Consul at Damascus, formerly, as I have said, Consul in Safed, I am persuaded that the worthy Austrian was mistaken, and that neither Tel Hum nor any other place on the shore of the Lake of Tiberias is now called Kaffirnahum by the native population.

The Consul mentioned what, if true—and on inquiry I did not hear it contradicted—would be interesting, namely, that Safed and the district immediately around it is called *Canaan* by the natives, who often speak of their "going to" or "coming from *Canaan*," when met journeying to or from the district of Safed. If this on further inquiry be found correct, may it not possibly account for the name of "Simon the Canaanite"?

The day on which we rested at Safed was Easter Sunday, and we had divine service, attended both by English and American friends, who had more or less

travelled with us from Jerusalem. In the afternoon we walked up to the ruins of the Crusader Castle of Safed, which immediately overhangs the town. The great earthquake shook and overturned even its rock-like walls, and completed the destruction which the Turks and Time had long since begun. The evening was glorious A holy Easter calm rested on mountain, plain, and sea. The view, too, was magnificent; and the thought that this was almost our last look at Palestine, deepened the feeling of sadness with which we gazed on the scene which was so holy to us all. To the south we saw Tabor, and Gilboa, and Hermon; and beyond them, the hills of Samaria. To the west, the long ridge of Bashan lined the sky, dotted with the characteristic moundlike remains of extinct volcanoes. Beneath us, 3000 feet down, lay the sea of Tiberias, calm as a mirror, shining from its northern end onwards to its southern, where we saw the long depression of the Ghor leading to the Dead Sea. The plain of Gennesareth, and the shore on which Capernaum, Chorazin, and Bethsaida must have stood, were mapped out below. The longer I gazed on this scene and endeavoured in silence to receive the spirit which it breathed, the present became like a dream, and the dreamlike past became present. We came away praising God for His mercy in giving us such an Easter day; and praising Him still more for giving an Easter

day to the whole world by which we are "born again to a living hope by the resurrection of Christ from the dead." Next morning we began the day's journey that was to take us out of Palestine.

XVI.

OUT OF PALESTINE.

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OUT OF PALESTINE.

THE night after leaving Safed we encamped at Maas. The first portion of our journey was through scenery, not only far surpassing anything we had seen in Palestine, but such as would attract attention and excite admiration if seen amidst the glories of Switzerland itself. The road which we followed during part of the day passed through extensive forests, luxuriant in spreading foliage and carpeted with brilliant flowers, revealing nooks of beauty that reminded me of the natural woods clothing some of our Highland hills and glens. There were many devious and perplexing paths, one of which was followed by our ardent flower-gatherer, and which, perhaps for the first time in his life, led him astray. It was some time before

he was recovered by the habitual wanderer, Meeki. We rode along the summit of a ridge running north and south. Suddenly, when emerging from the forest into one of its open glades, a scene of great beauty burst upon us. The ridge on which we stood descended for at least 2000 feet in a series of plains, green with crops, and clothed with underwood; until the hill-side rested on the dead flat valley which extends for twenty miles from the Lake of Tiberias to the roots of Hermon. This plain is occupied by a marsh, through which the Jordan flows into Lake Huleh, or Merom, which lay beneath us far down,—a bright eye, fringed with a broad circle of reeds, like eyelashes.

The situation of the ancient Kadesh Naphtali on the same ridge is very beautiful. I do not remember having seen such noble olives elsewhere. One which I measured was about 18 feet in circumference. The remains of columns, sarcophagi, and buildings—whether Jewish or Roman, I know not—are numerous and impressive. Kadesh was one of the cities of refuge, and it was comforting to think of even the temporary rest and peace that many a poor prodigal got by flying to it. It was also the birth-place of Barak; and nobly did its 10,000 Highlanders second their chief in his brave attack on Sisera, when the more comfortable Lowlanders kept to their fertile fields or profitable shipping. Joshua also

penetrated these inland solitudes when he fought the battle of Merom — just as the brave Montrose, who, fighting for a worse cause, entered our West Highland fastnesses, and by his very daring secured the victory. Here, too, Sisera was slain in the tent of Jael—a vile, treacherous act, done by a bold, enthusiastic, ignorant, well-meaning woman, and an act which we cannot but condemn, even when feeling no pity whatever for the brave but tyrannical Canaanite *Cateran* whose death restored to liberty thousands better than himself.

On our journey this day we passed a settlement of Zouaves from Algeria. It is on the side of a most romantic glen, near a hill which Dr. Robinson supposes to have been the site of the capital of Hazor. It was curious to see this village, inhabited by men who have come all this distance from their homes rather than submit to the French. It is probable that they had "compromised themselves" by a too great devotion to their country. But I was glad to see that they appear to have a most comfortable "location," and to be very prosperous in sheep, goats, and cattle.

I must also mention an incident of this day which greatly touched us. After passing through a prettily situated village—I forget its name—we came upon a rather excited crowd, composed chiefly of women, who were weeping and wringing their hands, as they accompanied

our cavalcade of muleteers. We discovered, on inquiry, that one of Meeki's servants—unfortunate wretch!—was a native of the village; and that the chief mourners on the present occasion were his mother and sisters, who had received him with joy, and, as the phrase is, "pressed him to their bosoms," as he suddenly and unexpectedly appeared in the old home. The excitement in the village, the honest tears of the women as they gazed after our lad, the eagerness with which relations and old companions accompanied him some way on the journey, I confess, "did my heart good." I was thankful for such evidences of the love which exists everywhere (in some hearts) and makes us all akin. The object of all this tender solicitude, was a remarkably nice youth, whose character might be summed up thus, "good-looking, active, and obliging"—a wonderful contrast to Meeki! I heartily expressed my sympathy with him by giving him the handsome *backsheesh* of a paper of good needles, some excellent thread, some artistic buttons, and a pair of glittering steel scissors, all of which I begged him to present, with my love of course, to his amiable and affectionate mother and sisters. The muleteer gratefully received, and as they say of the reply to all toasts, eloquently acknowledged, the gift, and the manner in which it was conveyed.

But my subject changes, and with it my thoughts.

When opposite Hermon I could not forget that this magnificent mountain, which towers over Palestine, and whose pure and eternal snows join its landscape to the sky, was the scene of the transfiguration of our Lord.

A true poet has beautifully expressed what until lately was the general belief:—

"What hill is like to Tabor's hill in beauty and in fame?
There in the sad days of his flesh o'er Christ a glory came;
And light o'erflowed Him like a sea; and raised his shining brow;
And the voice went forth that bade all worlds to God's Beloved bow." *

But the whole narrative, as is now generally admitted, suggests that it was Hermon, and not Tabor, which was for ever consecrated by this sublime event. I was thankful, when passing out of Palestine, to be able to associate with this the last and most sublime view from its sacred soil, one of the most impressive events which occurred in the history of Him whose life is the light of the whole land. That transfiguration, like Hermon, almost seems alone in its grandeur. It first of all united the old dispensation with the new. For Moses the representative of the law, and Elijah the representative of the prophets, appeared with Jesus in glory, and thus witnessed to Him who had fulfilled both the law and the prophets. Their work was finished. The stars which had illumined the old night were lost in the blaze of this risen Sun. A

* 'The Devil's Dream,' by Thomas Aird.

voice from the Shekinah now said, to Jew and Gentile:—"This is my beloved *Son*—hear *Him*." Moses and Elias therefore depart, and leave the disciples with Jesus alone. Henceforth He was to be all and all. Hermon, as connecting Palestine geographically with the Gentile world beyond, was a fitting place for such a revelation of Jesus, in whom alone Jew and Gentile were to become one. The transfiguration also united this world with the next. Moses and Elias had been in glory for many centuries, yet they remained the same identical persons, retained the same names, and spoke the same language, as when on earth. A most comforting thought to us! For while Christ will "change our vile bodies, and fashion them like unto his glorious body," yet to our human hearts it allays many fears, and answers many questionings, to know that we shall for ever be the same persons; preserving our individual characteristics—all that is imperfect excepted; retaining possibly our old names and old language, as Moses and Elias did; anyhow, that we shall know prophets and apostles, and our own dear ones, even as we are known of them. This thought makes parting from friends endurable, "which else would break the heart." How soothing to be assured that as certain as Jesus on the sides of Hermon conversed with Moses and Elias from heaven, and with Peter, James, and John from earth, so all who are united to the One Lord are

united to each other; and that, though we cannot make enduring tabernacles, or abide in any place, here below with our friends, however dear, we shall yet in spirit, in heaven and earth, live together with Christ and his whole Church. The Death which Christ accomplished at Jerusalem, the only subject, as far as we know, of converse between Him and those heavenly visitants on this day of triumph, is the pledge of this very blessing. And when in leaving Palestine a feeling of despondency deepened the fear as to our ever joining that grand army—the traces of whose conflicts and triumphs we had been following with such eager interest—Hermon once more supplied us with comfort, refreshing as its own dews, not only from faith in that Death which He *has* "accomplished at Jerusalem," but from the story of that distressed parent, who, disappointed in all other men, had brought his child to Jesus as He descended from the mount, and cried, with mingled hope and doubt, "If thou canst do anything for us, help us!" Oh, blessed reply! "If thou canst believe!" As if He had said, There is no barrier in me—only in thyself. Believe and live! Oh, blessed confession and prayer, which were accepted and answered:—"Lord, I believe; help thou mine unbelief." With this prayer in my heart I turned away from Hermon, though not from its undying memories.

The Litâny is as impetuous as a glacier stream, without a calm pool, or rippling ford. But we had a good old bridge to cross by, which saved us from all danger and trouble. High above to the left, on the top of a grand precipice washed by the raging stream, are the magnificent ruins of the Crusaders' stronghold, Kelat-el-Shukeef (Belfort). There is no ruin on Rhine or Danube so imposing.

We passed the bridge and were *out of Palestine!*

Some of our party ascended to the castle, and came back in raptures with the majestic pile itself, and the majestic view from its walls. I jogged on with Hadji, and occupied my time in giving him what as a mere dragoman he ought, as I told him, to know, but which, to my astonishment, he was profoundly ignorant of—that it was the leading facts of the Bible which make the land so interesting to those travellers on whom he depends. He listened with great patience, and seemed grateful for the information, wondering at the Bible stories connected with the places which we had visited together. Let other travellers give similar lessons, and dragomen will thereby become more intelligent and useful; nay, they may be able in their turn to instruct travellers who are very ignorant of their Bibles, and who do not even take the trouble of honestly reading

the portions of Scripture referred to in Murray's accurate pages.

We encamped at Nabathieyeh the Lower—our next stage after Maas. The whole aspect of the country was now changed. Groves of mulberries began to cover the valleys. The houses of the villages were built more substantially, and with some attempts at art. This could be easily accounted for by the fact that the country is beyond the region which is preyed upon by the Arabs of the desert. There being here some security for property, there was consequent industry with comparative comfort.

At no place did our presence attract greater attention than here. Most persons go to Damascus by Banias, or pass on to Sidon. The tent of the traveller is not so hackneyed therefore at Nabathieyeh as elsewhere. Crowds accordingly gathered round it, sitting in a circle three deep, the young in front and the old behind, as if gazing on wild beasts from another clime; but all were most civil and orderly. As usual, the musical-box produced the greatest excitement and interest, as did also the performance which I generally added, on the Jews' (or jaws'?) harp.*

* The Arabs are easily amused, and seem to have a keen sense of the ludicrous. A clever toy, an absurd mask, or whatever excites wonder or laughter in children, would stir a whole village, and in

I never saw so many perfectly beautiful boys and girls as here. And this is especially true of the boys of about ten or twelve years of age. The symmetry and elegance of their features, the exquisitely chiselled nose, lips, and chin, and the calm lustrous eyes, quite riveted me. One boy particularly struck us as possessing a face quite as ideal as that of him who, in Hunt's noble picture, represents the boy Jesus in the Temple.

The Turkish governor, in an old shabby surtout, and a shirt that seemed to have been washed in pea-soup, paid us an official visit; and was wonderfully high-bred in his whole manner, in spite of his garments. He was delighted with some photographs of my children, which I showed him with paterfamilias fondness, and he introduced some of his own "toddling" young ones to us. I was praising their appearance when Hadji told me that he dared not translate my words, as they would give offence. Such praises are feared as signs of an evil eye. I therefore simply echoed his pious wish expressed in regard to myself, that he might have many; although for aught I knew he may have had, like myself, almost as many as his nursery can well accommodate. We both salaamed, however, to the mutual compliment.

most cases be a far better passport for a traveller than the Sultan's firman or ugly revolvers. Laughter and merriment form a better and much more agreeable bond of union between the traveller and the "children of the desert," old and young, than pomposity and powder.

The next day's journey not very interesting. We wound down to Sidon, among stupid low hills with nothing worth looking at which I can remember. We were glad to hail the old seaport at last. As we approached it, the air for a considerable distance was laden with delicious perfume, which in this case we found came from orange-trees in full and glorious blossom. I had no idea that the odour of any flowers, even those of Araby the Blest, could be carried so far on the breeze.

We spread our carpets among the orange-trees for lunch and repose, enjoying the smell and the exquisite fragrance from the white masses of blossom overhead. The whole neighbourhood is one great garden filled with every kind of fruit-bearing trees—oranges, figs, almonds, lemons, apricots, peaches, pomegranates — to nourish which abundant streams of water are supplied from Lebanon. Our stay unfortunately was short. We had barely time to visit the old port, within the long line of the wall and castle which protect it from the north. As at Jaffa, the selection of the place as a harbour was evidently determined by a reef of rocks forming a deep lagoon within, and defending it from the waves of the outer sea. But beyond the usual attractiveness to the eye of everything oriental, and the old associations of the place, we saw nothing worth noticing, though there must be much in the town and neighbourhood. There is an

efficient branch of the American Syrian Mission here, labouring among the 5000 inhabitants of the town, and also in the upland valleys of the overhanging spurs of the Lebanon. It seems a thriving place, and survives in spite of its old wickedness. The sinners, not Sidon, have been destroyed—yet how has its former glory passed away!

Our camping ground for the night was on the river Damur, to reach which occupied us five hours from Sidon. The road from Sidon to Beyrout is described in "Murray" as being "one of the most wearying rides in Syria." We did not find it so. The two voices, "one of the mountains and the other of the sea," never were silent all the way. The "Great Sea" was dashing its billows on the sands to our left, along which we often rode, while to our right the "goodly Lebanon" contributed some of its lower ridges broken with rock and stream, and clothed with trees. I must admit, however, that the route for many hours is, on the whole, tame; and that the traveller who has time at his command should branch off to such places as El-Jun, not far from Sidon, near which is the old convent which Lady Hester Stanhope long occupied as her private lunatic asylum; and Deir-el-Kamar, one of the most picturesque villages in the Lebanon. We reached our tents about sunset, rather fatigued after our ride from Nabathieyeh; but we

enjoyed the luxury of a swim in the "salt sea faeme," which made us all fresh again.

The scenery of a considerable portion of the road next day on our way to Beyrout was extremely fine. The lower ranges of the Lebanon running parallel to the sea, with their slopes and glens clothed with mulberry and fig trees, and covered by white houses and villages high up on their steeps, and with old convents crowning all, reminded me of the road along the Riviera, between Genoa and Spezzia, and in some places was quite as beautiful. After passing through sandy dunes, through large olive groves, and an extensive forest of dwarf pines, we entered Beyrout, and found ourselves in Basoul's most comfortable hotel, and once more in the region of Boots and Waiter, table d'hôte, and civilisation.

XVII.

DAMASCUS.

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OUR party broke up at Beyrout. Our friends, who had travelled with us from Marseilles, and contributed much to our happiness, resolved to visit Baalbek. My brother, who had been formerly at Damascus, remained now at Beyrout; while Mr. Strahan and I, whose time was limited, found that we could get a glimpse of Damascus—but no more! Hadji Ali and the tents therefore passed into the service of our friends and it was not without some feelings of pain that, after settling accounts and *backsheesh* to the satisfaction of all parties, we bade our dragoman and suite farewell. The slight clankings of the chain which had heretofore bound us to Ali were forgotten in the mutual salaams with which we parted.

To our surprise, we learned that a French company had engineered an excellent road to Damascus, a distance of about ninety miles, and ran on it a well-horsed, well-appointed, comfortable diligence! No doubt this was very different from the poetry of a tent, and of a long cavalcade of mules and horses winding among the mountains of Lebanon, and along its old historic paths. But I must confess that the prosaic and much more rapid and comfortable mode of travelling was heartily welcomed and appreciated by us. Had we been obliged to depend on Meeki and his cavalry, we never could have seen Damascus, and consequently would have lost one of the most fascinating scenes in our journey.

Seated in the coupé, with six strong horses before it to drag us up the Lebanon, we left Beyrout at four o'clock in the morning, and arrived at Damascus about five in the evening. What a railway is in speed to a diligence, such is a diligence to ordinary riding in Syria. The travelling was admirably managed: short stages, good horses, excellent driving, resting-places at proper intervals, where "meat and drink" were nicely served, with French civility. We had a tolerable view of the country as we jogged along, at first slowly, up the steep ascent of the Lebanon for a few thousand feet, then in full swing down its eastern slopes, then briskly across

the flat of the Cœle-Syrian plains, then another long drag over the shoulder of the Anti-Lebanon, until finally, after passing along streams and canals, through cultivated fields and rich gardens and orchards, we entered Damascus, with the horses trotting and the whips cracking in a way which reminded one of the olden time of the *dillies* and *pavés* of Belgium or France. There was nothing Eastern in it. I presume that no carriage-wheels had until recently marked those hills or valleys since the days of the Romans.

The scenery of the Lebanon is among the finest in the world, and has been described in the most enthusiastic terms by all who have had time to penetrate its innumerable valleys or gaze on the glorious views from its many commanding heights. The picturesque villages and hoary strongholds, the bright verdure, farms, corn-fields, and pasture lands; the fine wooding, from noblest cedars to every fruitful tree, are all worthy of the "goodly Lebanon." But those who get glimpses only of scenery from the prison cell of a coupé, can hardly presume to describe it. What we saw was, however, sufficiently interesting and varied to make the journey agreeable. The finest view we got was that of the silvery Hermon closing up the Cœle-Syrian plain to the south. We again crossed the Litâny as it rolled on, to foam past Kelat-el-Shukeef, and empty itself in the Mediterranean near old Tyre.

Our Damascus hotel—the best "Laconda"—combined the comfort of the West with the picturesqueness of the East. The inner court and the fountains open to the skies, the balmy air, brilliant bright blue sky, fresh water, flowering plants,—all gave it an aspect of comfort and luxury which made it a most welcome and unexpected retreat.

Our first expedition in the morning was to a well-known spot, the Wely Nasr, half an hour's ride from the city. My old acquaintance, Mr. Ferrette, was our guide. Mr. Rogers, the able and learned Consul, and the patient, kind friend of every traveller, put his horses at our disposal. The Wely Nasr is a spot which has been visited by every traveller as affording *the* view, which, once seen, will ever be remembered as the finest of the kind on earth. It is a quiet Mahometan chapel, reared on the shoulder of the ridge of hills which rises immediately above the town, and close to the path by which travellers have for ages entered Damascus. By coming in the diligence we lost the impression which is made when the whole scene is beheld through an open arch which frames the marvellous picture. But although the landscape did not burst thus suddenly upon us, it was nevertheless far more glorious than we anticipated, in spite of all we had read and heard about it.

The one feature which arrests the eye is that wondrous oasis, that exuberant foliage of every hue of green, con-

tributed by various tints of olive, walnut, apricot, poplar, and pomegranate. This is interspersed with fields of emerald corn, topped here and there by the feathery palm, that always witnesses for the clime in which it grows; and with silvery flashes from the streams which circulate amidst the "bowery hollows" and through every portion of this vast garden, covering a space whose circumference is thirty miles, though in the pellucid atmosphere it seems to embrace but a great park. In the midst of this green sea, domes and minarets rise above the half-revealed and far-spreading houses and streets, like line-of-battle ships moored in some inland harbour; while beyond it all is brown rock or plain, hot and sultry-looking, as if beating back in despair the sun's rays that attack it with furnace heat. The gardens begin at the very foot of the bare white limestone ridge on which we stand, as the green waves of the deep sea roll along a rocky shore. Far in the distance and beyond the limit of the verdure, the flat plain sweeps to the horizon—here towards Palmyra and Bagdad, there to the Hauran, unless where it is broken by barren hills that rise above the shimmer, like islands amidst a shoreless ocean. What gave life to this fruitful spot was apparent. Close beside us, and at the bottom of a deep gorge to our right, through which we had passed in the diligence, the river Barada rushed clear and strong; and parallel to it were

several narrow deep canals, cut out of the rock, which convey the water at different levels to the city, gardens, corn-fields, and houses, until, having blessed the earth and the homes of men, it disappears into the lakes and marshes seen in the far distance.

But it is not alone what the eye sees which gives the charm to Damascus, but what we know, or what the imagination creates from the elements supplied by authentic history. Beautiful as the spectacle is, yet how would its glory almost pass away if it had no "charm unborrowed from the eye!" We can conceive of some city equally beautiful outwardly, erected in a desert, whether of Australia or California, and made the capital of diggers and men successful in their "prospecting." But could it ever, in the nature of things, look as Damascus does? It is impossible to separate the glory of any earthly scene from the magic charm with which human history invests it; and Damascus is the oldest city on the face of the earth. It remains a solitary specimen of worlds passed away: it is like a living type of an extinct race of animals. It was historical before Abram left Mesopotamia. For a period as long as that which intervened between the birth of Christ and the Reformation, it was the capital of an independent kingdom. For a period as long as from the dawn of the Reformation till the present time, the kings of Babylon and Persia pos-

sessed it. For two centuries and a half later the Greeks governed it; the Romans for seven centuries more; and since their departure, 1200 years ago, Saracens and Turks have reigned here. The mind gets wearied in attempting to measure the long period during which Damascus has survived, as if it were destined to mark the beginning and end of history, to be at once the first and last city in the world!

It is remarkable, also, how many distant parts of the earth are linked to this sequestered and solitary town. It is linked to Palestine by many a cruel war. The soldiers of King David garrisoned it. Nor can we forget how, in connection with Jewish history, there once passed out of these gardens on his way to Samaria a Commander-in-chief, yet a wretched leper, guided to a poor prophet of the Lord in Samaria by a young, unselfish, God-fearing Jewish captive, stronger than Naaman in her simple faith and truth; nor how the same man, who went forth with talents of gold and silver and goodly raiments as his precious treasures, returned with them, but valuing most of all some earth from the land whose God had restored him to health; and thinking more of the wild and fierce Jordan than of his own Abana and Pharpar. To this Damascus also Elisha, the great prophet who had healed Naaman, afterwards came,* when that remarkable

* 2 Kings viii. 7.

scene occurred in which the prophet, seeing the false heart of Hazael that was too false to see itself, "settled his countenance steadfastly, until he was ashamed; and the man of God wept!"

Damascus is connected, moreover, with the whole Christian world, for somewhere in this plain the Apostle Paul, at that time an honest Jewish-Church fanatic, under the strong delusion which "believes a lie," and thinking he did God a service, was journeying to extirpate by the sword a dangerous heresy which had arisen. There, beneath a bright noon-day sun, he spoke with Christ, and became "Paul the Apostle," a name for ever hallowed in the heart of the Christian Church. From Damascus in later years there went forth another power than his, an army which penetrated beyond the Himalayah, and established a dynasty at Delhi which, but as yesterday, after revealing the true and unchanged spirit of Islam, was swept away by British bayonets, so that at this moment the last rays of the sun which, rising in Damascus, so long shone in India, are setting in the person of the last Mogul, who is a transported convict in the Andaman Islands! From Damascus other conquering bands poured forth a stream of flashing scimitars and turbaned heads along the Mediterranean; crossed to Europe; and but for the "hammer" of Charles Martel, verily a judge in Israel whose arm was made strong by a merciful God,

the crescent might have gleamed on the summit of great mosques in every European capital. The whole history of the city is marvellous, from the days of the soldiers of Babylon to the Zouaves of Paris—from early and oft-repeated atrocities committed on its inhabitants by successive conquerors down to the late massacre of Christians by its own citizens. But, strange to say, we cannot associate one great action which has blessed the world with any one born in Damascus: the associations are all of idolatry, cruelty, and bloodshed. Yet Damascus lives on, while the site of Capernaum is unknown! Let the traveller review all this strange history as he sits at the Wely gazing on the ancient city, and then, ere he goes to rest, himself a small link in this chain stretching into the darkness of the past, let him thank God that he has seen Damascus!

We spent a happy day in wandering through the city. I need not attempt to describe its famous bazaars. I cannot say that I admired them more than those of Cairo, but I thoroughly enjoyed them as a theatre, exhibiting out-of-the-way life, and as at every yard revealing such strange oriental groups of human beings gathered out of every tribe, such pictures of form and colour, of man and beast, of old fantastic buildings and Arabian-Night-looking Courts and Khans, of shops for every sort of ware and for every sort of trade; such drinks, with ice from

Lebanon to cool them; such sweetmeats, the very look of which would empty the pockets of all the schoolboys in Europe; such antique arms, beautiful cloths, dresses, shawls, carpets of every kind and colour, as would tempt the fathers and mothers of the boys to follow their example;—all this, and more than I can describe, kept me in a state of child-like wonder and excitement as I moved through the bazaars.

My old friends the dogs seemed to me to make Damascus their capital. I was amused at the *table a'hôte* of the hotel in hearing a dispute regarding the number of the canine race in Damascus. The question discussed by two gentlemen who had for years resided in the city, was whether the number of dogs amounted to 200,000, or only 100,000, or 150,000. Some suggested larger numbers, but all agreed that 100,000 did not fully represent the grand army, the possibility of being a soldier in which so shocked the high-minded Hazael. An illustration, moreover, was given of Mahometan custom as applied to dogs. The law is, that any one accidentally killing another person must pay a fine as blood-money to his relations. But can this law apply to the killing of a dog?—not a Christian dog, who is worthless, but a bazaar dog, who is a useful scavenger. It must apply to dogs—so say the Damascus police—but how? In this way:—a dog's blood-money is valued at sixteen

piastres. Well, the murderer of a dog must forthwith report his crime to the police. The district in which the dog usually resided is then discovered, and the murderer must forthwith purchase bread with the blood-money; and as the dog's relatives are very many and not easily ascertained, he must divide the bread among all the hungry mouths that, backed by wagging tails, may wait to receive it. We give this illustration of canon, or canine, law as we heard it.

One object seen in passing along the streets I cannot forget, and that was a famous old plane-tree forty feet in circumference. There were others less noticeable, but adding beauty and shade to the thoroughfares and open paths.

We went along the now dreary and dull "Bazaar street," once called "Straight"; which probably represents the old street made famous by the history of St. Paul. Yet this must have been a stately thoroughfare in the time of the Romans. The remains of pillars indicate that a colonnade once ran along each side. The old Roman gate in the south wall, by which the Apostle probably entered, now opens to one side only of the old street. The central archway, and the other side-gate, are both built up.

Among the "sights" which engaged our attention was the great mosque. It is needless, judging from the light—

or darkness—which I have myself gathered from minute descriptions of buildings, to enter into any details regarding its fine court and cistern, its surrounding cloisters, noble pillars, and all the evidences which it affords of having been once a grand Christian church. This fact is unquestioned. There can, moreover, yet be seen on a portion of the old building an inscription in Greek, which fills the traveller with many strange thoughts of the past and future, as he reads it. Being translated, it is this: "Thy kingdom, O Christ, is an everlasting kingdom, and Thy dominion endureth throughout all generations."

A much-valued lady friend, Mrs. S———, who had accompanied us, with her son, Captain S———, and Lord N———, during portions of the journey in Palestine, visited the mosque along with us, guided by the Consul. That we were permitted to penetrate into the Holy Place without fear—in spite of some ugly looking faqueers from India, who seemed to growl hate out of their rags and vermin—indicated a very remarkable change in Islam. It arose out of political events which those most affected by them could no more understand than a child can connect the ebb of the tide in an inland arm of the sea, with the great ocean beyond or with the moon above. The well-known American Missionary, Dr. Thomson, of Beyrout, told me that he had accompanied the first British Consul into Damascus on

horseback. They were protected by a strong guard. Before then every "Infidel" had been obliged to enter the Holy City bare-headed, and on foot! Every Christian merchant, though possessing a fortune, was also compelled to rise in the presence of his Mahometan servant! Long after this, and as late as the Crimean War, no one except a Moslem could enter the great mosque on pain of death. Yet so great is the revolution caused either by the power of opinion, or by the fear of foreign bayonets, that, as I have said, we walked undisturbed through the mosque, simply paying *backsheesh*—a guinea, I think—to oil the consciences of its orthodox guardians. What a change is here!

We visited what was once the Christian quarter of the town. A more impressive sight I never witnessed. Oh how different is reading or hearing about any horror from actually witnessing it. I often, for example, had heard of slavery, and theoretically loathed it. But when a mother was once offered me for sale in America, and when, with honest tears, she begged me that if I bought herself I would buy her child, round which her arms were entwined, and not separate them, what was the burning shame I felt for a crime to destroy which millions of money and hundreds and thousands of lives have not in vain been sacrificed! And so, I had heard with sorrow of this massacre, and of the undying hate of ortho-

dox and fanatical Islam. Yet how much more intense was my sense of this hate when I saw a large quarter of a great city reduced to powdered fragments of stone and lime, and walked through or stumbled over street upon street in a chaos of ruin—hearing in fancy the loud or stifled cries for mercy, and the unavailing shout of desperate defence, from nearly 3000 Christians, who for a fortnight were being butchered in cold blood by these Mahometan demons! That fearful massacre was the true expression of Islam, the logical application of its principles. From Delhi to Jeddah, wherever it dare reveal itself, its spirit is the same. Nor can I agree with those who think that this is the last of the massacres. The last sacrifice by Islam will be coincident with its last breath; though there are, no doubt, Mahometans whose hearts to some extent practically correct their creed, and who are, like many other men, better than their beliefs.

But let me pass to more pleasing topics. We visited one or two private houses in Damascus, the Consul's among others, to form some idea of the Oriental style of domestic architecture. One has no suspicion when passing a common plain wall in the street, that on the other side of it may be a splendid palace. Every sign of what is within seems to be carefully concealed, lest it should attract the attention of the mob. A small door and

narrow passage which might conduct to the obscure home of an artisan, lead to a dwelling in which any prince might reside. Few things struck me so much as the beauty, stateliness, and luxury of these houses. In the centre is a large court, floored with marble. A fine fountain sends up its crystal water, and trees fill the air with perfume, and cool the ground with their shade. Above is the blue sky, with here and there a distant fleecy cloud. Into this court the public rooms open—not by doors, but by noble archways! If we pass through one of these archways we find ourselves in an apartment with its own marble entrance and fine fountain, and three high arches, opening into recesses on the right and left and in front. The floors are covered with rugs elevated above the level of the court. There are grand divans along their sides, with windows of coloured glass, while exquisite arabesque ornaments, in purple, blue, and gold, cover the walls and high roofs with intricate traceries and richest colour. Behind one couch we saw a fall of purest water, cooling the air, and passing under the floor to reappear in a fountain below. I have never seen any mansions which so fully realise the idea of a summer residence of perfect beauty. How much more might be made of this style amidst English scenery, and with an English family to give light and comfort to the rooms!

Anxious to overtake the Austrian steamer from Beyrout to Smyrna, and finding that we might miss her if we waited for the diligence, we resolved to post back during the night. The only kind of conveyance which is placed at the disposal of the traveller is a four-wheeled waggonette, with roof and curtains, and a seat along each side capable of accommodating three persons. We had two and sometimes three horses, and were driven by a tall jet-black Nubian. The Consul and a few friends saw us off, and with kind consideration furnished us with an additional wrapper, as night on the Lebanon might be very cold or even very wet. But all looked bright and promising for an hour or so after we started. Then however the wind began to rise, until as we faced it on the ridge of the Anti-Lebanon it blew a hurricane, and the rain fell in torrents. I never was exposed to such a storm. Very soon the curtains, which partially sheltered us, were torn into ribands, and the roof did not protect us from the rain, which soon became sleet, and blew with a fierce and bitter blast through the carriage. We had a strong double umbrella, under which we sought shelter for our heads as we spread it behind the back of the driver; but soon the umbrella was also shattered and torn. My companion, who was not so well rigged as I for the gale, began to suffer greatly from the cold; but as I had fortunately some spare clothes in a waterproof

bag, I drew a pair of stout trousers over his own, (and he did not find mine too tight!); a woollen shirt was tied over his head; worsted stockings were supplied for gloves, and with one of the long cushions thrown over him he was enabled in this picturesque garb to weather the tempest. The Nubian showed marvellous endurance, as he drove his two-in-hand or three-in-hand for thirteen hours. They were generally fine strong cattle, but once or twice they stopped, with a disposition to turn tail to the wind, and were with difficulty forced to meet it. The Nubian would not "*taste*," as we say in Scotland, but was thankful to have some brandy poured over his hands when benumbed by the snow on the mountain-top at midnight. We also, once or twice, when things looked very bad, gave the poor fellow some good *backsheesh* to keep up his heart and spirits. Wet, cold, and miserable though we were, yet the wonderful appearance of the landscape at sunrise roused us up. We were then winding our way over the Lebanon, and looking across the Cœle-Syrian plain to the ridge of Anti-Lebanon. The sun, with a red glare, was breaking through the wild rack of storm-clouds which were rolling over the mountains. Above, to the zenith, they were black as night, but gradually passed into a dull grey, and then into purple, that with ragged edges and long detached locks of streaming hair, swept along the ground, on which ever

and anon bright sunbeams lighted up green fields or some bit of mountain scenery. Had the forests of all Lebanon been on fire, and had their smoke, illumined by their flames, been driven by a hurricane across the fields and hills, the effect could not have been stranger or wilder.

As we came in sight of the Bay of Beyrout, about nine o'clock on Sunday morning, we saw evidences of the gale, in a French line-of-battle ship with struck masts, rolling her guns under; while the other vessels, with less majesty but with equal discomfort to their crews, seemed in danger of rolling their masts over.

It being thought prudent to delay the sailing of the steamer in consequence of the storm, we had a refreshing sleep at the hotel, and then spent the evening at the American mission house, where I had the happiness of conducting worship, and of meeting brethren with whose names I had been familiar, and whose labours for many years have been earnest and full of blessing. Next day we visited Dr. Vandyke in his literary den, where we found him engaged in bringing to a conclusion his great and learned work, the translation into Arabic of the Holy Scriptures. We also visited several schools, male and female, and were deeply interested in seeing such proofs of eager desire for superior education on the part of boys and girls of every class, and of every faith; and with the

thorough and efficient manner in which this desire has been met. The American mission prepared the way, quickened a taste for education among the people, and furnished good books and good teachers, yet for years found it up-hill work.

It is the rapid development of commerce, which has been falling into the hands of the Christian population, that now compels every young man, whether Jew or Greek, Druse, Turk, or Maronite, to be educated, and to acquire some knowledge of English, French, and Italian. The American war, by stimulating the cultivation of cotton wherever its fibre will grow or labour can be found, has helped on education, which in its turn will produce results that may lead to the fall of Mahometanism in Europe at least, and to the political supremacy of the Christian races, so long its slaves. The education of young women has followed the education of young men. Rich Christian husbands, who can marry but one wife, must have one who can be an intelligent companion; "and so on it goes," with wonderful and increasing rapidity.

The projected Syrian College will, when erected, (as I hope it will soon be,) complete the work of education. Let me also presume to express the hope that the learned and admirable native of the Lebanon, who is now at the head of the largest and best-taught school and

boarding-house in Beyrout, may find a place in the College worthy of his Christian character, talents, and past labours.

But the storm had now moderated, and we had to leave the Syrian shore. The view from the landing-place in the harbour of Beyrout has probably been painted by some artist capable of doing justice to it; but if not, it is worth the journey to do so. The foreground of the harbour, with such studies of form and colour as cannot be found in Europe; the quaint-looking boats, ships, and houses; and the glorious Lebanon rising over the ruined castle or battery that shuts in the port from the North, form a rare subject for a picture of Eastern life and scenery. I could, like some romantic lady, have kissed the old land ere I parted from it; but satisfied with pocketing a pebble from its shore, I stepped into the boat, and with many thanksgivings for the past, exchanged Eastward and the Holy Land for Northward and Home!

Here I must part with my readers, who have been kind enough to accompany me "Eastward." I told them frankly at the beginning of our intercourse that I had kept no journal, having had no intention of ever writing on the hackneyed subject; and I warned them besides to expect no "information" from me, such as is

afforded in so many admirable and learned volumes of Eastern travel. But I promised to describe what I saw in the land, and the real impressions made on my mind; and I have endeavoured to fulfil my promise. I shall feel thankful if the intense enjoyment and lasting good which I myself have derived from this short tour shall be shared in any degree by others.

APPENDIX.

APPENDIX.

No. I.—PAGE 16.

"THE last expiring token of the old spirit, in the old forms, which I have found is in the records of the Knights of Malta —the Knights Hospitallers of St. John of Jerusalem—when the news of the great earthquake in Sicily, in 1783, arrived at Malta. Then these poor feeble-minded Sybarites remembered for a moment their manhood and their knighthood, and their vows as Hospitallers: they manned their galleys, and with food, clothing, and medicines, and the consolations of their faith, were speedily seen in their half-military, half-priestly garb—the armour covered by the black robe of the white cross—at the bed-sides of the wounded and dying, as they lay amid the still tottering ruins of the devastated houses. In a very few years, in that same generation, the Order had passed away for ever; but it is pleasant to him who stands in the palace of the Grand Masters, among the trophies of their former greatness, or treads the aisles of the Cathedral of St. John, where every step is upon the em-

blazoned gravestone of a knight, to think of this, and not of any less worthy deed, as their last act.

> " 'The knight's bones are dust,
> And his good sword rust,
> His soul is with the saints we trust.' "

—*Sir E. Strachey's Essay on Chivalry.*

No. II.—PAGE 37.

THE population of Alexandria is understood to be about 200,000: 30,000 are Italians, and 10,000 Jews. The Greeks are also very numerous. The leading mercantile houses amount to about twenty-five; most of them English. The cotton of Egypt passes, of course, through Alexandria; 4,000,000 acres are said to be under cultivation, each acre yielding from 300 to 600 lb. There is in Alexandria an American mission to the Copts and Mahometans, with a boys' and a girls' school. The boys' school is well attended by the Copts, but the recent establishment of the Viceroy's schools, which offer the advantages of board, lodging, and pay, has naturally drawn away the Mahometan boys. The American missionaries have an Arabic service on Sundays, and recently the Arabic audience was too large for the room. The Church of Scotland has also an excellent mission in the city, superintended by my friend, Mr. Yuille. Miss Ashley's girls' school has about eighty scholars. The boys' school is also tolerably well attended. There is a "Bethel" ship in the harbour, belonging to the mission, which on Sundays has a large congregation, to which I had the pleasure of ministering. The late Pasha granted a free site for a place of worship, which is being erected by the Church of Scotland. Prussia is also erecting a new and commo-

dious church. The German Hospital has proved a great blessing. The present Pasha is, I have been informed, doing a good deal for education, and has founded a large number of schools throughout the country—two of them being in Alexandria. The pupils are admitted free, and kept at the expense of the Government. Such of them as enter the public service are exempted from the conscription. The Pasha also supports 150 priests in connection with his great mosque.

No. III.—PAGE 79.

A few hints regarding Palestine travel may be useful to some of my readers who may intend visiting the East.

The possibility of visiting Sinai *en route* to Palestine can be ascertained only at Cairo, owing to the unsettled state of the tribes of the desert; but at Cairo perfectly accurate information upon this point can be obtained.

A steamer, weekly, at least, leaves Alexandria for the Levant, and lands passengers at Jaffa; or—if the weather is bad, and that difficult seaport cannot be entered—at Caipha in the Bay of Acre, and under the shadow of Carmel. The time occupied in the voyage from Alexandria to Jaffa is at most thirty hours. Jerusalem can be easily reached from Jaffa in eight hours by Ramleh, and in twelve hours by the more interesting route of the two Beth-horons and Neby Samwil. A party may hire a dragoman at Cairo; but a good one may very possibly be obtained from the hotel-keeper at Jaffa, or even at Jerusalem. A single traveller ought not to engage one until he reaches Jerusalem. The pay for a dragoman at present is about thirty shillings a day for each person of a party of about five, if the engagement be for at least thirty days. The dragoman provides

tents, horses, mules, and all the provisions required, including the payment of the bills in the one or two hotels in which the traveller can reside. He pays also *backsheesh*, guards, everything in short, except perhaps his fare to Jaffa (if hired at Cairo) or back fare from Beyrout. Travelling by Sinai, the traveller should be more liberal with his *backsheesh* than the dragoman. Not so in Syria. The dragoman should never be permitted to divert a traveller from any route agreed upon, or which he may wish to take. In spite of some infirmities of conduct, for which others were fully as much to blame as himself, we found our dragoman, Hadji Ali, a very honest and trustworthy fellow: but with all of them a strict bargain should be made before starting, and they need to be carefully watched as well as kindly treated during the journey.

We would recommend the traveller before beginning his tour in Palestine, to make a very careful survey of the girths of his saddles, and the backs of his horses, which are often in a horrid state. Those who wish to ride with comfort ought to provide an English saddle, with good girths and crupper. Two pairs of trousers partially lined with chamois leather should be provided for riding. A bag and portmanteau are not too much luggage; a pith hat and white canvas shoes are comfortable; a Scotch plaid indispensable. The traveller should carry a revolver: it looks heroic, fierce, and dangerous; but it is much safer for himself and others, much more economical, as well as more agreeable for all parties, that he should leave the powder and ball in England till his return. A medicine chest is also very useful and respectable, provided it is never used except when the cook or muleteer wishes to avail himself of some of its "unemployed operatives."

If any man has the courage not only to brave the dangers of that "great and terrible wilderness," but also the anathemas of the "Anti-Tobacco Society," I would advise him to buy his cigars in England, should he be so foolish as to buy cigars anywhere. If, further, he can defy the Teetotal League and the great prophet of Mecca, he will find a little good cognac at the end of a long day's journey helpful to his "often infirmities." Better far if he can with equal comfort dispense with both of these appliances. A pound or two of good tea from England should be added to his store. We also recommend him to take with him not only Dean Stanley's 'Palestine,' which is essential, but also his 'Lectures on the Jewish Church.' 'The Land and the Book,' the last edition of Robinson, and the articles on Palestine and the Holy Sepulchre in Smith's Dictionary, will be also useful. For the sake of the nervous I may state that there is really no danger whatever, nor any discomfort, to any sensible and healthy man in journeying throughout all Palestine: it can be done with perfect ease. And for the sake of the married, I may add, that any healthy lady up to fifty, even though she has never been on horseback since she was at school, may accompany her spouse, provided she be sedate and willing to take things quietly. From Beyrout a most comfortable diligence will convey passengers in a single day, and along a splendid road, to Damascus. "Touching the coined money," as Dominie Sampson would say, sovereigns are the best coin all the world over: the circular notes of Coutts can be easily cashed at Jerusalem or Beyrout. Finally, a large Macintosh sponge bath, with sides only inflated—and these about ten inches deep—can be packed into a small space, and will be found at sea and on land a great luxury.

No. IV.—Page 184.

The following is Dr. Stanley's account of the Battle of Beth-horon, extracted from his 'Lectures on the Jewish Church—Part I.,' which many readers, who have not access to the volume, will read with interest :—

"The Battle of Beth-horon or Gibeon is one of the most important in the history of the world; and yet so profound has been the indifference, first of the religious world, and then (through their example or influence) of the common world, to the historical study of the Hebrew annals, that the very name of this great battle is far less known to most of us than that of Marathon or Cannæ.

"It is one of the few military engagements which belong equally to Ecclesiastical and to Civil History—which have decided equally the fortunes of the world and of the Church. The roll will be complete if to this we add two or three more which we shall encounter in the Jewish History; and, in later times, the battle of the Milvian Bridge, which involved the fall of Paganism; the battle of Poitiers, which sealed the fall of Arianism; the battle of Bedr, which secured the rise of Mahometanism in Asia; the battle of Tours, which checked the spread of Mahometanism in Western Europe; the battle of Lepanto, which checked it in Eastern Europe; the battle of Lutzen, which determined the balance of power between Roman Catholicism and Protestantism in Germany.

"The kings of Palestine, each in his little mountain fastness,—like the kings of early Greece, crowded thick together in the plains of Argos and of Thebes, when they were summoned to the Trojan war,—were roused by the tidings that

the approaches to their territory in the Jordan valley and in the passes leading from it were in the hand of the enemy. Those who occupied the south felt that the crisis was yet more imminent when they heard of the capitulation of Gibeon. Jebus, or Jerusalem, even in those ancient times, was recognised as their centre. Its chief took the lead of the hostile confederacy. The point of attack, however, was not the invading army, but the traitors at home. Gibeon, the recreant city, was besieged. The continuance or the raising of the siege, as in the case of Orleans in the fifteenth century, and Vienna in the seventeenth, became the turning question of the war. The summons of the Gibeonites to Joshua was as urgent as words can describe, and gives the key-note to the whole movement. 'Slack not thy hand from thy servants; come up to us quickly, and save us, and help us; for all the kings of the Amorites that dwell in the mountains are gathered together against us.' Not a moment was to be lost. As in the battle of Marathon, everything depended on the suddenness of the blow which should break in pieces the hostile confederation. On the former occasion of Joshua's visit to Gibeon, it had been a three days' journey from Gilgal, as according to the slow pace of eastern armies and caravans it might well be. But now, by a forced march, 'Joshua came unto them suddenly, and went up from Gilgal all night.' When the sun rose behind him, he was already in the open ground at the foot of the heights of Gibeon, where the kings were encamped (according to tradition) by a spring in the neighbourhood. The towering hill at the foot of which Gibeon lay, rose before them on the west. The besieged and the besiegers alike were taken by surprise.

"As often before and after, so now, 'not a man could

stand before' the awe and the panic of the sudden sound of that terrible shout—the sudden appearance of that undaunted host, who came with the assurance not 'to fear, nor to be dismayed, but to be strong and of a good courage, for the Lord had delivered their enemies into their hands.' The Canaanites fled down the western pass, and 'the Lord discomfited them before Israel, and slew them with a great slaughter at Gibeon, and chased them along the way that *goeth up* to Beth-horon.' This was the first stage of the flight. It is a long rocky ascent, sinking and rising more than once before the summit is reached. From the summit, which is crowned by the village of Upper Beth-horon, a wide view opens over the valley of Ajalon, of 'Stags' or 'Gazelles,' which runs in from the plain of Sharon. Jaffa, Ramleh, Lydda, are all visible beyond.

"'And it came to pass, as they fled before Israel, and were in the *going down* to Beth-horon, that the Lord cast down great stones from heaven upon them unto Azekah.' This was the second stage of the flight. The fugitives had outstripped the pursuers; they had crossed the high ridge of Beth-horon the Upper; they were in full flight to Beth-horon the Nether. It is a rough, rocky road, sometimes over the upturned edges of the limestone strata, sometimes over sheets of smooth rock, sometimes over loose rectangular stones, sometimes over steps cut in the rock. It was as they fled down the slippery descent, that, as in the fight of Barak against Sisera, a fearful tempest, 'thunder, lightning, and a deluge of hail,' broke over the disordered ranks; 'they were more which died of the hailstones than they whom the children of Israel slew with the sword.'

"So, as it would seem, ended the direct narrative of this second stage of the flight. But at this point, as in the case of

the defeat of Sisera, we have one of those openings, as it were, in the structure of the Sacred history, which reveal to us a glimpse of another, probably an older, version, lying below the surface of the narrative. In the victory of Barak we have the whole account, first in prose and then in verse. Here we have, in like manner, first, the prose account; and then, either the same events, or the events immediately following, related in poetry—taken from one of the lost books of the original canon of the Jewish Church, the book of Jasher.

"On the summit of the pass, where is now the hamlet of the Upper Beth-horon, looking far down the deep descent of the Western valleys, with the green vale of Ajalon stretched out in the distance, and the wide expanse of the Mediterranean Sea beyond, stood, as is intimated, the Israelite chief. Below him was rushing down, in wild confusion, the Amorite host. Around him were 'all his people of war and all his mighty men of valour.' Behind him were the hills which hid Gibeon—the now rescued Gibeon—from his sight. But the sun stood high above those hills, 'in the midst of heaven,' for the day had now far advanced, since he had emerged from his night march through the passes of Ai; and in front, over the western vale of Ajalon, may have been the faint form of the waning moon, visible above the hail-storm driving up from the sea in the black distance. Was the enemy to escape in safety, or was the speed with which Joshua had 'come quickly, and saved and helped' his defenceless allies, to be rewarded, before the close of that day, by a signal and decisive victory!

"It is doubtless so standing on that lofty eminence, with outstretched hand and spear, as on the hill above Ai, that the Hero appears in the ancient song of the Book of Heroes.

Then spake Joshua unto JEHOVAH
In the day 'that God gave up the Amorite
Into the hand of Israel.' (LXX.)
When He discomfited them in Gibeon,
'And they were discomfited before the face of Israel.' (LXX.)
And Joshua said:
'Be thou still,' O Sun, upon Gibeon,
And thou, Moon, upon the valley of Ajalon!
And the Sun was still,
And the Moon stood,
Until 'the nation' (or LXX. 'until God') had avenged them upon their enemies.
And the sun stood in 'the very midst' of the heavens
And hasted not to go down for a whole day.
And there was no day like that before it or after it,
That JEHOVAH heard the voice of a man,
For JEHOVAH fought for Israel.
And Joshua returned, and all Israel with him, unto the camp in Gilgal."

No. V.—PAGE 367.

All the great feasts ordained by Moses are kept by the Samaritans. Dr. Stanley and Mr. Mills both witnessed the observance of the Passover, and have given minute accounts of it. I quote the following from Mr. Mills, who saw it latest—in 1860. I may here say that the best account I have seen of this singular people is to be found in Mr. Mills' book, 'Nablous and the Modern Samaritans.' Murray. 1864.

"On the tenth of the month the sacrificial lambs are bought. These may be either kids of goats or lambs; the latter being generally, if not at all times, chosen. They must be a year old, males, and 'without blemish.' The number must be according to the number of persons who are likely to be able to keep the feast. At present they are five or six, as the case may be. During the following days, which are

days of preparation, these are carefully kept, and cleanly washed—a kind of purification to fit them for the paschal service; a rite, in all probability, always observed in connection with the temple service (John v. 1). Early on the morning of the fourteenth day, the whole community, with few exceptions, close their dwellings in the city, and clamber up Mount Gerizim; and on the top of this their most sacred mountain, pitch their tents in a circular form, there to celebrate the most national of all their solemnities. . . . I and the friends who had joined me at Jerusalem, had pitched our tent in the valley, at the foot of Gerizim; and on the morning of the 4th of May we clambered up the mountain. On reaching the encampment friendly voices greeted us from several tents, and having visited those best known to us, we rested for a while with our friend Amram. Presently we took a stroll up to the temple ruins, and from thence had a perfect view of the interesting scene. . . The tents, ten in number, were arranged in a kind of circle, to face the highest point of the mountain, where their ancient temple stood, but now lying in ruins. Within a radius of a few hundred yards from the place where I stood, clustered all the spots which make Gerizim to them the most sacred mountain, the house of God. . . . About half-past ten, the officials went forth to kindle the fire to roast the lambs. For this purpose, a circular pit is sunk in the earth, about six feet deep and three feet in diameter, and built around with loose stones. In this, a fire, made of dry heather and briars, &c., was kindled, during which time Yacub stood upon a large stone, and offered up a prayer suited for the occasion. Another fire was then kindled in a kind of sunken trough, close by the platform where the service was to be performed. Over this, two cauldrons full of water were placed, and a short prayer offered. . . . There

were forty-eight adults, besides women and children; the women and the little ones remaining in the tents. The congregation were in their ordinary dress, with the exception of the two officers and two or three of the elders, who were dressed in their white robes, as in the synagogue. A carpet was laid on the ground near the boiling cauldrons, where Yacub stood to read the service, assisted by some of the elders—all turning their faces towards the site of the temple. Six lambs now made their appearance, in the custody of five young men who drove them. These young men were dressed in blue robes of unbleached calico, having their loins girded. Yacub, whilst repeating the service, stood on a large stone in front of the people, with his face towards them. . . . At mid-day, the service had reached the place where the account of the paschal sacrifice is introduced: 'And the whole assembly of the congregation of Israel shall kill it in the evening' (Exod. xii. 6); when, in an instant, one of the lambs was thrown on its back by the blue-clad young men, and the *shochet*, one of their number, with his flashing knife, did the murderous work with rapidity. I stood close by on purpose to see whether he would conform to the rabbinical rules: but the work was done so quickly that I could observe nothing more than that he made two cuts. The other lambs were despatched in the same manner. Whilst the six were thus lying together, with their blood streaming from them, and in their last convulsive struggles, the young *shochetim* dipped their fingers in the blood, and marked a spot on the foreheads and noses of the children. The same was done to some of the females; but to none of the male adults. The whole male congregation now came up close to the reader; they embraced and kissed one another, in congratulation that the lambs of their redemption had been slain. Next came

the fleecing of the lambs—the service still continuing. The young men now carefully poured the boiling water over them, and plucked off their fleeces. Each lamb was then lifted up, with its head downwards, to drain off the remaining blood. The right fore-legs, which belonged to the priest, were removed, and placed on the wood, already laid for the purpose, together with the entrails, and salt added, and then burnt; but the liver was carefully replaced. The inside being sprinkled with salt, and the hamstrings carefully removed, the next process was that of spitting. For this purpose, they had a long pole, which was thrust through from head to tail, near the bottom of which was a transverse peg, to prevent the body from slipping off. The lambs were now carried to the oven, which was by this time well heated. Into this they were carefully lowered, so that the sacrifices might not be defiled by coming into contact with the oven itself. This accomplished, a hurdle, prepared for the purpose, was placed over the mouth of the oven, well covered with moistened earth, to prevent any of the heat escaping. By this time, it was about two o'clock, and this part of the service was ended. At sunset, the service was recommenced. All the male population, with the lads, assembled around the oven. A large copper dish, filled with unleavened cakes and bitter herbs rolled up together, was held by Phineas Ben Isaac, nephew of the priest; when, presently, all being assembled, he distributed them among the congregation. The hurdle was then removed, and the lambs drawn up one by one; but, unfortunately, one fell off the spit, and was taken up with difficulty. Their appearance was anything but inviting, they being burnt as black as ebony. Carpets were spread ready to receive them; they were then removed to the platform where the service was read. Being strewn over

with bitter herbs, the congregation stood in two files, the lambs being in a line between them. Most of the adults had now a kind of rope around the waist, and staves in their hands, and all had their shoes on. 'Thus shall ye eat it; with your loins girded, your shoes on your feet, and your staff in your hand' (Exod. xii. 11). The service was now performed by Amram, which continued for about fifteen minutes; and when he had repeated the blessing, the congregation at once stooped, and, as if in haste and hunger, tore away the blackened masses piecemeal with their fingers, carrying portions to the females and little ones in the tents. In less than ten minutes the whole, with the exception of a few fragments, had disappeared. These were gathered and placed on the hurdle, and the area carefully examined, every crumb picked up, together with the bones, and all burnt over a fire kindled for the purpose in a trough, where the water had been boiled. 'And ye shall let nothing of it remain until the morning; and that which remaineth of it until the morning ye shall burn with fire' (Exod. xii. 10). Whilst the flames were blazing and consuming the remnant of the paschal lambs, the people returned cheerfully to their tents."

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